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A

HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL COMMENTARY

ON

THE OLD TESTAMENT,

WITH

A NEW TRANSLATION,

BY

M. M. KALISCH, PHIL. DOC., M.A.

5L 26.61
IN IV Vol's.

GENESIS.

English Edition.

LONDON:
LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, LONGMANS, AND ROBERTS.
1858.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY WERTHEIMER AND CO.,
CIRCUS PLACE, FINSBURY CIRCUS.

Bl.
298,709.
Sept. 2, 1881

PREFACE.

THE Book of Genesis abounds with problems no less perplexing than interesting. Its vast range includes branches of the natural sciences and of history, of ethnography and philosophy; and with materials of singular variety skilfully blends great and fruitful ideas. It has, accordingly, provoked an overwhelming mass of comment, partly in confirmation, and partly in opposition to its statements; it has proved the battle-field for almost every shade of opinion, both religious and sceptical; and it is evidently destined to become the arena for the critical discussion of the whole ground-work of Biblical theology, and for the introduction of a new era in religious thought.

The conviction of the surpassing importance of the book has strengthened us to face the numerous difficulties of a conscientious interpretation. We have endeavoured impartially to weigh the facts, and calmly to draw the inferences. It has been our aim to neglect no essential evidence. But after due consideration, the conclusions have been stated with unreserved frankness. As we have no preconceived theory to defend, we have never been tempted to distort the text, or to indulge in reckless combinations; and we have always tried so to unfold the argument, that the reader may at once either discover our error, or admit our result.

The excavations on the banks of the Euphrates and Tigris, the continued researches on Indian and Egyptian antiquities, the many new accounts of observing travellers

who have recently visited the lands of the Bible, and the rapid advance made in the study of oriental languages and literature, have materially augmented the means for illustrating the Scriptures. They have especially enabled us to pursue more efficiently than was hitherto possible, the momentous enquiry concerning the relation which the Hebrew writings bear to the general cycle of Eastern traditions. We have attempted to make these new sources of information available for the exposition of Genesis, and to point out the peculiarities which, in spite of a similarity of materials surprising in many instances, distinguish the records of the Israelites from those of other ancient nations. By thus separating the *form* of the narratives from the *ideas* which they embody, many difficulties may find a solution doing equal justice to universal history, and to the development of the Hebrew mind. A later portion of this work will contain a general Introduction to the Pentateuch, in which many questions regarding Genesis, here not yet admitting of a final decision, will be more fully examined.

The generous reception which has been awarded to the first part of our work, encourages us to express the wish that the same indulgence may not be withheld from the present volume, which, considering the greater difficulties of the task, claims indulgence perhaps even in a higher degree.

M. Kalisch.

London, May 3rd, 1858.

INTRODUCTION.

I. Even the philosophical historian, who undertakes to delineate the progress of the human race, may consider that his legitimate labours first commence at the point where he perceives the earliest dawn of well-ascertained facts emerging from the mists of fables and legends, and where his eye is arrested by the sight of several nations, as the Hindoos and Egyptians, the Babylonians and Assyrians, considerably in advance on the path of prosperity and civilisation. Yet it may not be unprofitable, under two aspects, to overstep that boundary. The student may either trace the antecedent phases of our planet, point out its organic relation to the universe, and determine the place which man occupies in the system of creation; or he may, by acute reasoning, endeavour to ascertain the first steps which mankind made in its struggle for improvement, before it arrived at that stage of development which existing annals or monuments exhibit. This double task was attempted by nearly all religious lawgivers of antiquity. Not only did they dwell upon the origin of heaven and earth, but they described the history of man from the commencement, the transition from innocence to sin, the toils of existence, and the arts that soften or alleviate them; and they indicated the links which joined their own people with the first human families. Now, whatever may be the positive value of the facts and reflections they furnished, the cosmogonies belong to the most instructive relics of primitive literature. They lay open, with a distinctness attainable from few other sources, the hopes and cravings, the aims and ideals, of the different nations. They teach the supposed connection between man and his destiny, or the powers that

govern it; and they embody the moral principles believed to be necessary for the virtuous life of the individual, and to form the chief end of all human generations. But distinguished for depth and purity are the descriptions with which the first book of the Old Testament opens. They are designed to enforce, that mankind is one great fraternal tribe, protected and guided by the care of a Father, the only and omnipotent Creator; they assert the perfect equality of all men; and propose as their model the wisdom and holiness of God. The Biblical narrative next draws in rapid outlines the advancement of the earliest ages, and the descent and diffusion of the various nations of the earth, down to the founder of the chosen race of Israel; then gradually contracting its circle, it relates the beginning of the *theocracy*, or the conclusion of the solemn covenant between God and the Hebrews; and it lastly carries on their history to the time when they commenced to grow into a numerous and important community. How far these statements are *historically* reliable, the following Commentary will endeavour to investigate in every individual instance: but their *moral* and *philosophical* truth is entirely independent of the materials from which it is derived. Facts are indeed invaluable, because they form the imperishable basis of research: but they are a useless encumbrance unless they enclose some idea, influence the will or the feeling of man, and contribute either to his ennoblement or his happiness. The views set forth in the book of Genesis have not only become the foundation of the culture of the Hebrews, but, through them, of a large part of mankind; and if they have as yet not produced all the beneficent effects of which they are capable, it is because passion, short-sightedness, and egotism, have been unable to recognise and to appreciate the common kernel of humanity in the modified forms of human thought.

II. The book commonly bears the Greek name *Genesis* or *Creation*, from reasons implied in the preceding remarks; while in Hebrew Bibles it is headed by the first word of the original text, *Bereshith* (*in the beginning*).

III. It may appropriately be divided into two chief sections, the one containing *a general introduction*, physical and historical, from the Creation of the World to the Call of Abraham; and the other treating of *the History of the*

Hebrew Patriarchs. These principal portions admit of several subdivisions, in the following manner:—

I. The General Introduction; Chapters I. to XI.

1. The Creation (i.—ii. 3).
2. The Paradise and the Fall (ii. 4—iii. 24).
3. The Generations between Adam and Noah (iv. 1—v. 32).
4. The Deluge (vi.—ix.).
5. The Genealogy of Nations (x.).
6. The Tower of Babel and the Dispersion (xi. 1—9).
7. The Generations between Noah and Abraham (xi. 10—32).

II. The History of the Hebrew Patriarchs; Chapters XII. to L.

1. The History of Abraham and Lot (xii. 1—xxv. 11).
2. The History of Ishmael and Isaac (xxv. 12—xxviii. 9).
3. The History of Jacob and Esau (xxviii. 10—xxxvi. 43).
4. The History of Joseph, and the Settlement of Jacob's Family in Egypt (xxxvii.—l.).

IV. Scriptural statements enable us to make the following simple computation:—

1. Abraham had attained his 100th year when Isaac was born (Gen. xxi. 5);

2. Isaac was 60 years old at the birth of Jacob (xxv. 26);

3. Jacob settled in Egypt at the age of 130 years (xlvii. 9);

4. From this time to the Exodus elapsed a period of 430 years (Exod. xii. 40). Hence the interval between the birth of Abraham and the Exodus comprises 720 years (viz. 100+60+130+430).

Further, Solomon began the building of the Temple in the fourth year of his reign, 480 years after the Exodus (1 Kings vi. 1); and as he ascended the throne B.C. 1015, the Israelites left Egypt B.C. 1491 (viz. 1011+480=1491).

Abraham was, therefore, born B.C. 2211 (viz. 1491+720); and as he left Mesopotamia in the 75th year of his life (xii. 4), this event occurred in B.C. 2136.

The dates employed in this calculation are the corner-stones of Biblical chronology; they are so consistent, and form so complete a chain, that they ought not to be renounced in favour of the intentional corruptions of ancient writers, or of the conflicting combinations of later critics. —As the departure of the Hebrews from Egypt took place B.C. 1491, and the uninterrupted numbers of Genesis place this event in the 2669th year after the Creation (see the following list); the first year of the Christian era is the

4160th of the world (viz. 2669+1491), or 400 years later than according to the usual Hebrew chronology, which dates the Creation at B.C. 3760.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

A.M.	B.C.	EVENTS & THEIR COMPUTATION ACCORDING TO YEARS OF THE WORLD.
	4160	Adam created.
130	4030	Seth born (v. 3).
235	3925	Enos born (v. 6; 130+105=235).
325	3835	Cainan born (v. 9; 235+90=325).
395	3765	Mahalaleel born (v. 12; 325+70=395).
460	3700	Jared born (v. 15; 395+65=460).
622	3538	Enoch born (v. 18; 460+162=622).
687	3473	Methuselah born (v. 21; 622+65=687).
874	3286	Lamech born (v. 25; 687+187=874).
1056	3104	Noah born (v. 28; 874+182=1056).
1556	2604	Shem born (v. 32; 1056+500=1556).
1656	2504	The Deluge began (vii. 11; 1056+600=1656).
1657	2503	The Deluge ceased (viii. 14).
1659	2501	Arphaxad born (xi. 10; two years after the Flood).
1694	2466	Salah born (xi. 12; 1659+35=1694).
1724	2436	Eber born (xi. 14; 1694+30=1724).
1758	2402	Peleg born (xi. 16; 1724+34=1758).
1788	2372	Reu born (xi. 18; 1758+30=1788).
1820	2340	Serug born (xi. 20; 1788+32=1820).
1850	2310	Nahor born (xi. 22; 1820+30=1850).
1879	2281	Terah born (xi. 24; 1850+29=1879).
1949	2211	Abraham born (xi. 26; 1879+70=1949).
1959	2201	Sarah born (xvii. 17; 1949+10=1959).
2024	2136	Abraham emigrated from Haran (xii. 4; 1949+75=2024).
2035	2125	Ishmael born (xvi. 16; 1949+86=2035).
2048	2112	Covenant and Circumcision of Abraham and Ishmael (xvii. 24; 1949+99=2048).
2049	2111	Isaac born (xxi. 5; 1949+100=2049).
2084	2076	Terah died (xi. 32; 1879+205=2084).
2086	2074	Sarah died (xxiii. 1; 1959+127=2086).
2089	2071	Isaac married Rebekah (xxv. 20; 2049+40=2089).
2109	2051	Jacob and Esau born (xxv. 26; 2049+60=2109).
2124	2036	Abraham died (xxv. 7; 1949+175=2124).
2149	2011	Esau married (xxvi. 34; 2109+40=2149).
2172	1988	Ishmael died (xxv. 17; 2035+137=2172).
2193	1966	Jacob married Leah and Rachel (see p. 519; 2109+84=2193).
2200	1960	Joseph born (xxx. 25; 2193+7=2200).
2217	1943	Joseph sold into Egypt (xxxvii. 2; 2200+17=2217).
2229	1931	Isaac died (xxxv. 28; 2049+180=2229).
2230	1930	Joseph appointed viceroy of Egypt (xli. 46; 2200+30=2230).
2239	1921	Jacob and his family settled in Egypt (xlvii. 9; 2109+130=2239).
2256	1904	Jacob died (xlvii. 28; 2239+17=2256).
2310	1850	Joseph died (l. 22, 26; 2256+54=2310).
2669	1491	Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt (xii. 40; 2239+430=2669).

GENESIS.

I.
GENERAL INTRODUCTION.

CHAPTERS I. TO XI.

I. — THE CREATION.

CHAPTERS I. AND II. TO VER. 3.

PRELIMINARY ESSAY.

ON THE RELATION BETWEEN THE SCRIPTURES AND THE NATURAL SCIENCES, ESPECIALLY GEOLOGY AND ASTRONOMY.

THE modern researches in the natural sciences are as gigantic in their extent, as they are incontrovertible in their main results. The investigation of the laws of the material world, and their application to practical purposes, form the characteristic pursuits of our age. But the Bible also alludes, in many important passages, to physical laws and to natural phenomena. It became, therefore, an indispensable task for the Biblical student, and especially the theologian, to compare those recent results with the respective Scriptural statements. The conclusions at which these men arrived, though vastly differing in detail, may be reduced to two chief classes. Not a few divines and scholars — whose zeal, unfortunately, overruled their reason — flatly denied the correctness, and even possibility, of such facts: every one knows that Galileo was compelled to abjure and to curse the Copernican system of the earth's motion as fallacious and heretical; Voetius described it as a neologian fabrication; and the learned Francis Turrettin, not much more than one hundred and fifty years since, endeavoured to overthrow it by Scriptural and physical arguments. But the opposition to that great astronomical truth has gradually vanished away before the colossal labours of Kepler, Newton, and their illustrious followers; nor will anybody at present, as once the learned doctors of Salamanca did, decry the views of Columbus as an impious heresy; and if objections are still raised by some tenacious straggler, they are received as a curiosity, causing hilarity rather than provoking controversy. But more vehement were the denouncements hurled, up to a very recent date, against the results of geology, itself a comparatively recent science; it was declared an unholy and atheistic pursuit, a dark art, a "horrid blasphemy," a study which has the evil one for its author; and its votaries were designated as arch-enemies of religion and virtue, infidels standing in the service of the infernal powers.

The other class of scholars, more sober and less sceptical, acknowledges, either wholly or partially, the exactness of the natural sciences, but denies emphatically that there exists the remotest discrepancy between these results and the Biblical records. This is at present by far the most prevalent opinion among theologians; they posi-

tively assert, that if there is an apparent contradiction, the fault is not in the Scriptural text, but in its erroneous exposition. They have, therefore, proposed a vast number of explanations intended to prove that harmony; and they have endeavoured to show that the present notions of astronomy and geology, though not clearly expressed in the Bible, are certainly implied in the words, or may easily be deduced from their tenour.

We believe the time has arrived for pronouncing a final and well-considered opinion on these momentous points; the materials necessary for this decision exist in abundance; they are all but complete; and we propose to submit to the reader an analysis which will enable him to judge and to decide for himself, and to form an opinion founded, not upon indefinite conceptions, but upon indisputable facts.

There is, indeed, a third and very large class of scholars, who attempt to evade these questions altogether, by simply asserting that the Bible does not at all *intend* to give information on physical subjects — that it is exclusively a *religious* book, and regards the physical world only in so far as it stands in relation to the moral conduct of men. But this is a bold fallacy. With the same justice it might be affirmed, that the Bible, in describing the rivers of Paradise, does not speak of geography at all; or in inserting the grand list and genealogy of nations (in the tenth chapter), is far from touching on the science of ethnography. Taken in this manner, nothing would be easier, but nothing more arbitrary, than Biblical interpretation. It is simply untrue that the Bible entirely avoids these questions; it has, in fact, treated the history of creation in a most comprehensive and magnificent manner; it has in these portions, as well as in the moral precepts and the theological doctrines, evidently not withheld any information which it was in its power to impart. Therefore, dismissing this opinion without further notice, we shall first compare, under different heads, the distinct statements of the first chapters of Genesis with the uncontroverted researches of the natural sciences; we shall then, secondly, draw from these facts the unavoidable conclusions as regards the possibility of a conciliation; and shall, lastly, review the various attempts which have hitherto been made to effect that agreement.

We shall, in this sketch, particularly, study the utmost simplicity compatible with accuracy.

I.—THE ANTIQUITY OF THE EARTH.

According to chronological computations based on the Old Testament, the earth, as a part of the universe, was created B.C. 4160, or about six thousand years hence. Even the larger chronologies of the Septuagint, Hales, and others, fix this date not further back than between seven and eight thousand years.

But the researches of the natural sciences, especially geology, lead to widely different conclusions; they prove an antiquity of the earth of such vastness, that our imagination fails to conceive, and our numbers are almost unable to express it. The task of defining the geological chronology by exact, and even approximate numbers, has been shunned by the ablest scholars, and has hitherto defied their zealous efforts. Let us survey the principal arguments: —

The crust of the earth, which is supposed to be about 50,000 feet, or two and a half geographical miles, in thickness, and which has been examined to about half that depth, consists of a number of different layers or strata, which, although seldom occurring in a complete series, invariably succeed each other in the same order, or have generally, at least, correspondents or equivalents upon other areas. These various beds represent as many *creations*, or progressive revolutions of the earth. They were produced by volcanic influence, the agency of the water, and chemical processes, in a manner which we shall be enabled to describe more fully in a later part of this treatise.

But those strata have, for the sake of convenient arrangement, been classified in

three great groups; of which the oldest series, or that most remote from our surface, is called the Primary, the next upwards the Secondary, and the last, or uppermost, the Tertiary System.

1. The lowest stratification to which human knowledge has been able to penetrate is that of *Gneiss*, consisting of the component parts of the granite rocks, which spread beneath it in a crystalline form, and constitute the material of the principal mountains of Europe: the gneiss is, therefore, probably the product of the granite, worn, arranged, and acted upon by water and by the heat which fills the interior of the earth. This process of diffusion and wearing off, of depositing and permanent disposition, is excessively slow; the lapse of a century would scarcely produce a few inches of this substance. Now the gneiss-rocks in Scotland, Ireland, and other countries, exceed "many thousand yards," as, in fact, the lower strata are generally by far the deepest in thickness. What an immense period of time was required to form them?

2. The *Slates* and *Mica Schist*, which follow above the gneiss, have a thickness of three to four miles; they occur in overwhelming masses in Scotland, Cumberland, and Wales; their formation is "a work *infinitely slow*," and overpowers the mind again with the idea of *enormous* epochs.

3. The *Silurian* strata, consisting of slate-rocks, with dark limestones, sandstones, and flagstones, have a united thickness of about a mile and a half. They are the results of the alternate play and repose of volcanic action; and it is obvious, that "*myriads of ages* must have been occupied in the production of these formations, before the creation of man, and the adaptation of the earth's surface for his abode." The Biblical age of the world, if compared with these vast periods of time, sinks into absolute insignificance.

4. The group of the Secondary beds begins with the *Old Red Sandstone*, which, on account of its most frequent occurrence in Devonshire — sometimes to a thickness of 10,000 feet and more — is now called the *Devonian*. Who can calculate the immensity of time required to form these masses, which in Scotland also are found in astounding quantities?

5. One of the most interesting systems is the *Carboniferous group*, which consists partly of mountain limestone, composed almost entirely of the shells and coralline productions of sea animals, partly of millstone grit, and partly of coal, composed of compressed vegetable matter, shale, and sandstone, in alternate layers. The aggregate thickness of this group amounts nearly to 5,000 feet; whilst in South Wales the coal-layers have a depth of 13,500, and in New Scotland of 14,500 feet; and we are again compelled to strain our imagination with a notion of time almost beyond its capacity.

6. The next thousand or two thousand feet in the crust of our planet are occupied with the *New Red Sandstone*, composed of Magnesian limestone, variegated marl, clay, conglomerates, rock-salt, and other strata, pre-supposing long and repeated changes to effect their production.

7. The *Oolitic System*, of the thickness of about half a mile, is evidently composed of depositions from sea-water, the mingled waters from river-mouths, and even fresh water of rivers and lakes. It indicates a certain change in the volcanic activity of the internal heat of the earth; and millenniums were necessarily required to pile up these huge rocks.

8. One of the most universal and extensive groups are the *Cretaceous layers*. Chalk masses, to the thickness of more than a thousand feet, mixed with flint, green sand, and bluish clay, have not only been discovered in almost all the countries of Europe, but also in different parts of Asia, Africa, and America; so that this formation has often, though erroneously, been considered to mark the commencement of a totally different order of things. But it is certain, that the whole lapse of time neces-

sary to produce this part of the entire stratification "is astonishing; to our faculties, in the present state, it is immense," whether chalk be considered to consist of myriads of infusoria, or to have arisen from the decomposition of corals.

9. The name of the *Tertiary System*, lastly, has been given to the beds which follow immediately above the chalk strata, and form the layers nearest to the present surface of the earth. They are very variously composed of clays, sands, and limes, intermixed with coral rocks, peat, marls, and travertins, with drift, erratic blocks, and gravel, with bone-caves, mud-deposits, and almost mountain-high masses of insects. All these strata together form a thickness of at least six or eight hundred feet. And the greater part of even these formations must reach back to a far higher antiquity than that which the Biblical computations allow to the creation of the whole earth, with all its infinite and prodigious stratifications, by the extremely slow and gradual operation of deposition and consolidation, frequently interrupted by the tremendous upheavings from the bowels of the fiery earth. The formation of even those strata which are nearest the surface must have occupied vast periods, "probably millions of years," before they assumed their actual state. And these processes of the active elements have not ceased; they are constantly working, and produce new formations before our eyes, as in bygone ages. Islands have, mostly in consequence of volcanic upheavings, appeared even in recent times; and modern works on the development of our planet contain abundant and interesting instances; they keep alive within us the conviction, that the present aspect of the earth's surface will in due time be subjected to vast and essential changes; and that, however imperceptible the alteration, and however enormous the period required to complete it, our present continents will be scenes of revolutions which must alter both their form and condition.

In order to give some idea of the immensity of geological epochs, we introduce a few examples:—

1. The great tract of peat near Stirling, in Scotland, forming but one single bed of coal, has required nearly two thousand years; for the Roman works are preserved below it; and, in general, a century forms a layer of coal not thicker than seven lines. It is, therefore, a moderate estimate to put down the production of the coal series of Newcastle at 200,000 years.

2. The period during which the strata of coal, shale, sandstone, and limestone were deposited over the site of the basaltic hill called Arthur's Seat, at Edinburgh, is estimated at 500,000 years.

3. The old sandstone occurs in Scotland to a vertical depth of more than 3,000 feet; and as a Scotch lake scarcely deposits mud or marl at the rate of half a foot in a century, at least 600,000 years were required for the production of this series alone.

4. By far the larger part of the dry land has been raised out of the bed of the sea, by a process which has been calculated (from certain parts of Sweden) to produce about three feet in a century. Now, in several of the glens of Scotland occur sea-beaches, or beaches of ancient lakes, twelve hundred feet and more above the present sea-level; their formation must, therefore, have required at least 40,000 years. The eastern coast of Scandinavia rises about forty inches every century; it has, during the historical time, become about 200, and in general apparently 300 feet higher; this involves a period of at least 8,000 years; and yet was this elevation not regularly progressing, but was interrupted by considerable depressions; for sixty feet below the present level, near Stockholm, a fisherman's cottage has been discovered, which once stood at the margin of the sea.

5. The coral-rocks of the Red Sea, and of the Indian and Pacific Oceans, many fathoms in depth, and many hundred miles in extent, are formed by little insects, which secrete small particles of carbonate of lime, and thus gradually produce those majestic masses. Who will calculate the boundless ages exhausted by that process?

6. The volcanic regions in the centre of France contain rocks of silicious deposits, one of which is sixty feet thick, and required at least eighteen thousand years for its formation.

7. The river Niagara wears away the edge of the precipice over which it falls, between lake Erie and lake Ontario, about one foot annually. It has hitherto thus worn away a space of seven miles in the direction of lake Erie; and this process has, therefore, required *at least* 35,000 years; and will require about 70,000 years more to reach with its falls that lake. — There are many other denudations and erosions on the present surface of the earth; they are the effect of the slow action of the ocean, which has in some regions worn away the rocks more than two miles in depth; and this process, occurring in the present geological epoch, required in itself a vast space of time. The following instance may serve as an illustration:—

8. Terraces and beaches, 400 to 1,000 feet high, composed of gravel, sand, and clay, comminuted and deposited by water chiefly, were, after the drift epoch, obviously formed when the continents were drained of the waters of the ocean, and the rivers were cutting down their beds. The same process is still going on; but within the whole historical time, terraces and beaches of scarcely the height of a few feet have been formed. It is difficult to conceive the vastness of time which was required for these elevated terraces. Those who attribute almost all the changes, and especially the formation of the terraces, to the influence of the deluge, are obliged to take refuge in an assumption which is in direct opposition to the Biblical narrative, namely, that the water remained in many places for a long period on the surface of the earth, forming large inland seas or lakes.

9. Around the present coast of Great Britain runs an escarpment, of various height and character, which marks the former, or "old coast line." But as far as historical records recede, the present line has existed as the girdle of the seas. Now, in both of them are caves, hollowed out by the attrition of the surf, more than a hundred feet in depth; those of the old coast line are considerably deeper; and it must have required many centuries to excavate by so slow a process the tough trap or hard gneiss to such great depth; the lowest estimate fixes that period at six thousand years. And yet the epoch of the old coast line forms a "mere beginning," a "mere starting point," in geologic history; for no species of shell seems to have become extinct during that epoch, and even those which no longer occur on the shores of Britain are abundantly found in the higher northern latitudes, in Iceland, Spitzbergen, and Greenland; a circumstance which in itself points to a time when a large portion of Great Britain was submerged in a sub-arctic sea, and when this country existed "as but a scattered archipelago of wintry islands."

10. The Mississippi carries down to its mouth one cubic mile of earth in about five and a quarter years; but the whole delta contains 2,720 cubic miles; it required, therefore, more than 14,000 years to be formed by such deposits; and though that river may not always have flowed on regularly in the same manner, the possible fluctuations were not so great as materially to affect that calculation.

11. The valley of the Nile is covered with a bed of slime, deposited by the river, which annually carries down to the sea above 3,000 millions of cubic feet of detritus, or "as much as would build forty pyramids of the largest dimensions." That bed, like that of the adjacent desert, rests on a foundation of sand. Its average thickness was found by the French scholars who accompanied Napoleon on his Egyptian expedition, in the year 1800, to be six and a half metres, or about twenty feet; and as the deposition of slime amounts in a century to about four inches and a half, the whole bed had required about 5,650 years. But this is only a very inconsiderable portion of the earth's crust in that country. For that foundation of sand rests, for nearly three hundred miles, upon a thick bed of the marine or Nummulitic limestone, which is of

extremely slow formation, and upon a newer stratum of later Tertiary age. Nor is that limestone the oldest of the rocks of Egypt. "It rests on a sandstone of Permian or Triassic age; the sandstone rests, in turn, on the famous Breccia de Verde of Egypt; and the Breccia on a group of azoic rocks, gneisses, quartzes, mica schists, and clay slates, that wrap round the granitic nucleus of Syene." They amount to about ten miles of fossiliferous rocks; and if the sand deposits of twenty feet in thickness required 5,650 years for their formation, the age of the underlying strata, fossiliferous and azoic, is immeasurably greater.

These facts may suffice to impress the reader with the inconceivable dimensions of time revealed in the mysterious structure of the earth; the computations, though necessarily but approximate, are on the whole neither doubtful nor exaggerated; and they show that the six or seven thousand years which the Bible allows since the origin of the earth, are a mere fraction of the time which geology demands for its antiquity.

II.—THE CREATION OF THE WORLD IN SIX DAYS.

It has, indeed, been very positively contended, that the days mentioned in the Biblical record of Creation signify periods of a *thousand years*, or of indefinite extent. But this imputed meaning is absolutely against the usage and genius of the Hebrew language; and the days of creation are really and literally periods of four and twenty hours. However, it might be asserted — and it has, in fact, been frequently advanced — that the earth, with all its various layers and stratifications, has, by the Divine will, been called into existence in that limited number of days; and that God, after the completion of this lordly act of creation, has left nature and all her component parts to those eternal and immutable laws with which He had endowed her. But this opinion is rendered impossible by the following facts: —

1. In all the strata of the earth, except the two or three lowest, are found organic remains of creatures which possessed and enjoyed life, and which evidently perished, partly by that revolution of the earth which buried the old formation, and partly by the change of climate which took place in the next epoch. It may be important to observe, that each stratum has its own characteristic species.

A brief summary of these remains will be sufficient for our purpose. In the slate-rocks of North Wales and Cornwall are found the earliest remains of animal existence, consisting of two or three species of zoophytes (lamelliferous corals), polyps, and casts of several species of single and double-valved shell-fish, more highly organized even than our cockles and oysters. If this latter fact should appear surprising, we observe, that it is by no means an established principle that the organic beings of every formation are of a higher structure than those of the preceding system, as if nature were *steadily* progressing and improving. This supposition becomes more than doubtful by the single fact, that the earliest forms of life which occur are not plants, but animals. The exact inquiry into this interesting point is rendered difficult by a particular circumstance. The immense subterranean heat must necessarily have destroyed, without a trace, those organisms which might have existed in the first system of stratification, nearest to the fiery nucleus of our planet. It is certain that we find in the lower strata, almost exclusively, the remains of marine animals; while the terrestrial races, which exhibit the higher organic forms, are extant in very limited proportions. Even in the present state of the earth, *animal* life is predominant in the depths of the sea, whilst the productions of the vegetable kingdom prevail on the continents. It must, however, be admitted, that the earth was always and uninterruptedly peopled with living beings after they had once been introduced, and that, although the systems varied in correspondence with the altered conditions of the earth, there exists a certain general resemblance or analogy between the forms of the different periods. A perpetual but

systematic change is working in nature; this is the rule of the material world; it is made the grand conservative and controlling principle of the universe.

In the Silurian formations, which more properly commence the grand series of organic beings, more than 375 species of animals are embedded.

In the Devonian and the New Red Sandstone systems, have been discovered numerous bones and skeletons of fishes and other marine creatures, the very genera of which are now no more existing, and some of which are of the most surprising form and description. In the corresponding masses of Germany and France, the organic remains are peculiarly abundant. Marine plants also appear more copiously.

The mountain limestone, which belongs to the Carboniferous group, is entirely composed of the remains of coralline and testaceous animals, often many miles in length and breadth; while the coal-strata themselves consist wholly of compressed plants, of which upwards of three hundred species have been ascertained, though infinitely more existed; they were mostly of comparatively simple form and structure; two-thirds belong to the cellular or cryptogamic kind, without flower or fruit, whilst the type of this era was the *fern* or breckan, which thrives best in warm, shaded, and moist situations; and a vegetation existed "abundant and luxurious beyond what the most favoured spots on earth can now show." The higher classes of plants increased as the globe grew older.

The Old Red Sandstone includes the fossils of zoophytes, conchifera, some tribes of fish, some traces of land plants; perhaps also the first perfect birds, some of small, others of gigantic size; and the foot-prints of those batrachians which have attracted the most zealous attention, and to which we shall later have occasion to allude in a very curious connection. But both in the New Red Sandstone, and still more in the subsequent Oolitic strata, occur in great abundance the huge lizard-like animals, of extraordinary size, power, and armature: the voracious *ichthyosaurus*, of the length of a young whale, fitted both to live in the water and to breathe the atmosphere; of the general form of a fish, to which, however, were added the teeth and breast-bone of a lizard, the paddles of the whale tribes, the beak of a porpoise, and the teeth of a crocodile; the *plesiosaurus*, of similar bulk and equal rapacity, with a turtle-like body and paddles, a serpent-neck, terminating in a formidable lizard-head, and most extensively preying upon the finny tribes; further, the *megalosaurus*, an enormous lizard, forty-five feet long, a carnivorous land creature; the *pterodactylus*, or *flying saurian*, a lizard with bat-like wings; *crocodiles*, some of which were herbivorous, as, for instance, the iguanodon, reaching the amazing length of a hundred feet, or twenty times the size of the iguana of the Ganges, its present representative. Strongly, indeed, do these monstrous and terrible forms remind us of those strange creatures of fancy popular in ancient times and in the middle ages, the winged dragons and griffins, the gorgons, hydras, and chimeras: their huge jaws threatened with fearful teeth; their necks were almost equal in length to half that of the entire body of the boa-constrictor; they had enormous, mail-like, impenetrable bodies and terrific claws; —and all darted upon their prey with irresistible vehemence.—The Oolitic beds contain, further, the remains of about twelve hundred other astonishing species and forms, the first specimens of insects, and about fifty plants.

But only in deposits above the chalk formations do we meet with mammifers. About four thousand forms, all different from the present species, are found in the Tertiary strata; some of them are most remarkable for their size and form, as the palæotherium, the ponderous dinotherium, with the bent tusks in its lower jaw, and many other thick-skinned animals (pachydermata), like the hippopotamus and rhinoceros. Some of the species of elephants were of enormous magnitude; the mastodon, with his tusks projecting from both upper and under jaw, reached the height of twelve feet; the mammoth, the megatherium, with claw-armed toes more than two feet in length, and the megalonyx

were of gigantic proportions and iron-like organization; we find, further, the bear, the horse, and the dog; seals, dolphins, and whales; massive oxen, camels, and other ruminants; the majestic Irish elk, with its broad plank-like horns; and even several felinæ or carnivora, and traces of monkeys (quadrumana): till at last the older creatures became extinct, and were succeeded by the existing occupants of the land and the water.

Now we ask, if the earth was created within six days, how and for what conceivable purpose were these numberless, and often huge and appalling, forms of beings, *exhibiting every stage of growth*, embedded in the different strata of the earth? We believe there is scarcely any man preposterous or blasphemous enough to impute to the Deity such planless and reckless destruction in the midst of His majestic acts of creation. Many species, and even many distinct genera, have thus entirely disappeared; they are no longer represented on the earth. Generally, even the organic beings of one formation exist no more in the next higher group of rocks. Do not these circumstances compel us to suppose an indefinite antiquity of the earth's crust?

Of the vast *number* of animals found in the earth, some idea may be formed, if we observe, that, according to Ehrenberg, one cubic-inch of the polishing slate of Bilin, in Bohemia, contains 41,000 millions of individuals of the species *Galionella distans*, and one billion 750,000 millions of the species *Galionella ferruginea*. Some of the huge Egyptian pyramids are entirely built of Nummulitic limestone, which consists of chambered shells of very diminutive size, although of wonderful structure. The polishing-stone — for instance, that of Tripoli — is composed of exquisite shells, of so minute dimensions, that a cube of one-tenth of an inch contains about 500 millions of individuals. These animalcules, subject to the general geographical distribution over the globe, colouring the water, and emitting phosphorescence in the sea, never sleeping, and forming immeasurable masses of earthy and rocky matter, exceed in their collective volume, perhaps, that of all the other animated beings, and a single individual produces in a few hours millions of beings like itself.

Equally prodigious is the luxurious abundance of the Pre-Adamite vegetation; trees of immense thickness, and of extraordinary age, are found in the earth; and we adduce the following analogies:—The English oak attains to the age of 1,000 to 1,500 years, the yew to between 2,000 to 3,000 years; the *Wellingtoniana gigantea* is nearly as high as the great pyramid of Egypt—viz., 450 feet—it was said to be 3,000 years old, but has at least an age of 1,120 years; the Boabab (*Adansonia digitata*), growing in Senegal and other parts of Africa, a tree of enormous magnitude, with a trunk of thirty feet in diameter, offers specimens more than 5,000 years old; and the Taxodium (*Cypressus disticha*), an American tree, is stated to possess a longevity of nearly 6,000 years, and one now growing near Oaxaca, in Mexico, is believed to go back to the origin of the present state of the earth. But, further, the interior of the earth contains palms and coniferæ, which are strangely mixed together, just as at present European forms grow together with tropical ones in the same forest, as, for instance, at Chilpanzingo, on the western declivity of the Mexican table-land, or in the Isle of Pines, south of Cuba; which remarkable fact, Columbus already pointed out in one of his letters. But besides these majestic products of vegetation, there are those immense numbers of little gramina and low cryptogamia, which form the material of the enormous coal-beds; for it is calculated that all the forests of America together would not be sufficient to form one single coal-seam equal to that of Pittsburg. But some trees embedded in the coal strata are indeed of gigantic size; the fossil araucarian in the Granton quarry, though wanting both root and top, measures sixty-one feet in length, by six feet in diameter; and another, seventy feet in length, by four feet in diameter; whilst the stem of a Lepidodendron, near Edinburgh, is considerably thicker than the body of a man, and was probably above seventy feet in height. Hitherto,

about 3,000 genera of fossil plants have been discovered in the beds of the earth; and this number is considered insignificant compared with the probable real amount of vegetable life in the preceding conditions of our earth. Although some plants are less capable of resisting the action of water than others, and some are even totally decomposed if for some time immersed in that element, especially the simplest forms of flowerless (cryptogamic) vegetation; the proportion of the different families found in a fossil state leads, on the whole, to a safe conclusion with regard to the primitive flora of the earth; the plants which have been preserved are in themselves amply sufficient to serve as a basis for such conclusions. Now those vegetable remains — it is remarkable to observe — have more or less a *tropical* character, which is a sure proof of the higher temperature of our planet in former epochs; they show a surprising uniformity of plants over the whole earth, with but very little local difference, though they bear a different character in different periods, and consist, in each individual epoch, of but a very limited number of species — which are as many witnesses for the former more equal distribution of heat on the earth; it is most interesting to observe, that every later period shows the *prevalence* of a more perfect genus of plants than the preceding one, so that the different epochs might be almost described by their predominant vegetation; the profoundest botanists have arrived at the conclusion that the earlier flora contained the same principal classes and families, though not all the minor species, of the present flora; but that the former possessed the simpler forms of vegetation in the highest possible perfection, whilst the latter only produced the higher and more complicated genera, *so that a successive and ascending development in the vegetable kingdom, which is still in endless progress, is manifest from the remotest periods*; that the number of species has during the succeeding geological epochs steadily increased; that the internal connection between all the vegetable creations is the result of one idea working through the infinity of time after a comprehensive plan; but that if we recede through a space of "many millions of years," to the first origin of all vegetable existence, we must confess the working of a supernatural cause, which defies human comprehension, and which has endowed the earth with the germs of the endless varieties of families, genera, and species; but we can scarcely accede to the very widely-spread theory of a "primitive plant," or "cell," or monad, producing all the later and more perfect vegetable forms by way of a partial metamorphosis; for every new formation of the crust of the earth is incontrovertibly the product of almost entirely new elements not before existing, and therefore amounting to a new creation; and the vegetation of even the last Tertiary epoch, or that below the most recent one, goes back to a period of at least 100,000 years before the present era. It appears, however, that many of the plants are "hereditary" through various geological epochs; and that certain species have traversed many thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands of years, in spite of the local and successive revolutions on the earth's surface. For submarine forests in several parts of the globe consist of trees which still cover the neighbouring continents, though the *animals* found in the same localities in a petrified state have ceased to exist; and many species of plants are not found in regions where they might thrive perfectly well according to their structure, or to the present condition of the globe. They seem to be absent from such countries only because they did not exist there in former geological epochs.

2. It is certain, both from ocular evidence and from inductive conclusions, that most of the animals discovered as fossils in the strata of the earth have died in a natural course on the spot where they enjoyed life. Now, as many of them are creatures of long life, and many reached an age far beyond the time now allotted to the creatures of the earth, it is impossible that they should have accomplished the full circle of their existence in a few days: the many theories which have been ventured to prove the contrary are so extravagant, that they do not even deserve notice. They proceed from

the vain desire to support a tenacious preconception; they are neither based upon any allusion of the Biblical text, nor derived from natural laws or phenomena. Conjecture fancy, and mysticism, are the parents of these abortive attempts.

3. In some beds we find traces of ancient forests, and enormous fossil trees, with concentric rings of structure, marking *the years of growth*; in the *same* layer there are trees of *very different* ages: can these results be produced in a few days? Are we allowed to suppose such arbitrary confusion and perversion of the ordinary laws by Him who assigned to nature and to all her productions their unchangeable laws?

4. The forms of organic life are, especially in the three principal systems, markedly distinct, both with regard to their structure and to the position in which they are found. So, for instance, are the animals of the chalk-beds perfectly unmixed with those of the overlying Tertiary strata; if the formation of both coincided in time, it would be impossible to conceive this entire separation of these organic creatures. Thus, also, it is unquestionable, that an exceedingly protracted time elapsed between the period of the highest Silurian beds and that of the mountain limestone (which forms the lowest part of the Carboniferous group); for we observe a total change in the inhabitants of the sea at the two respective epochs. It is a truth, which can no longer be disputed, that our planet presents a gradual approach to the present order of things, through many and vastly protracted stages, all of them preparatory to the appearance of man. The same laws and conditions, now apparent and working in nature, have existed throughout all geological ages, though generally in a more or less modified degree. Thus there was, indeed, at all epochs, a parallel advance in the physical aspect of the globe and its organic forms, ascending, on the whole, from the lowest to the higher structures; but many species, both of the animal and vegetable kingdom, became extinct in the subsequent periods, and a constant substitution took place for those organisms which had become unfit for the altered state of the planet.

But all these changes, however extraordinary and astounding, are only as many manifest proofs of the creating activity of an Omnipotent Power, which, through unnumbered millenniums, after an all-wise though recondite plan, prepares new continents in the hidden depths of the fathomless sea, or in the volcanic abysses of the burning earth; lifting them up from the secret womb by a tremendous, but salutary, revolution, and peopling them with other organic beings—harmonising their structure with the modified condition of the planet.

These facts may suffice to prove the utter impossibility of a creation of even the earth alone in six days. The difficulties are infinitely increased, if we proceed to the contemplation of the whole universe, and examine—

III.—THE FORMATION OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM.

The Biblical text teaches that God created, by His all-powerful command, on the first day the light; and on the fourth, the sun, the moon, and all the heavenly hosts (vers. 3—5, 14—19). Without, in this place, entering into the question, how there could be light before the existence of the sun, we shall succinctly state the theory by which modern astronomy attempts to explain the formation of the solar system, and which, from one of its most characteristic features, is generally called the *nebular hypothesis*. It was first proposed, although with a certain diffidence, by the great French naturalist, Laplace, but has subsequently been developed and repeated, with greater assurance and clearness, by other eminent astronomers.

Originally, the universe was a chaos, or a confused mixture of matter. It was filled with a vaporous mass of a degree of density so infinitely low, that its existence could scarcely be perceived; from this reason the atoms did not act upon each other, and the chaotic mixture remained in motionless repose. In the course of time some physical cause produced a greater attraction of the masses, and destroyed that inert indifference,

so that atoms began to work upon atoms. Thus concentrated substances were formed in numberless parts of the primitive vapour. And as concentration of matter always disengages heat, those substances were reduced to a state of fiery incandescence. One of these igneous conglomerations constitutes the primordial matter of our planetary system. By continued condensation, this substance gradually formed itself to a consistent mass, and found its centre. By attraction of other distant cumulations, or by some different cause, it was brought into a rotary motion, which increased in rapidity the more the volume of that substance was diminished by contraction. But not all parts of the original matter were capable of suffering such immense condensation, and therefore disengaged themselves entirely, in their uncondensed condition, as soon as they were set free by the separation of the planetary matter; and as that detachment took place not only in the equatorial regions, but in different other parts of the primitive mass, *comets* were formed, with orbits the most various and the most eccentric. The accelerated velocity of motion caused not only a spherical shape of the material, but effected the detachment of its extreme parts whenever their centrifugal force had become stronger than the central attraction.

A ring, encompassing the whole equator of the gaseous spheroid, was disjoined, because here the rotary motion rose to the greatest celerity. This ring continued its rotation by itself; but as soon as any point in its circumference obtained a preponderance, the ring broke, and contracted itself into a circular body, or *planet*, with a two-fold motion round its axis, and round the principal gaseous ball, which remained in the centre as the *sun*. This phenomenon repeated itself an indefinite number of times, and thus the various planets were formed, of which the remotest were the earliest. By the same process which caused the formation of the planets from the original igneous matter, the *moons*, or *satellites*, disengaged themselves from the planets. The ring, thus separated from the *earth*, contracted itself into *one* ball, which is our moon; that of Jupiter, Uranus, and Neptune broke into different parts, and hence their greater number of moons, of which, at present, four, six, and two, respectively, have been observed; whilst the ring of Saturn, though having formed from its mass eight satellites, has hitherto remained unbroken, and revolves in its entirety round that planet.

This is, in broad outlines, the hypothesis of Laplace concerning the formation of the solar systems. It owes its chief support to the admirable telescopic observations of Sir William Herschel, which have disclosed to us worlds of amazing wonders. This illustrious astronomer traced the progress of condensation in the assemblage of nebulæ, "much in the same manner as in a large forest we may trace the growth of trees among the examples of different ages which stand side by side," or as we see the different stages in the lives of individuals; he has examined the distant nebulous matter, in some instances feebly condensed round one or more faint nuclei; in others, exhibiting brighter separated nuclei, and forming multiple nebulous stars, each surrounded by its own atmosphere; and in others still uniformly condensed, and producing nebulous (planetary) systems, finally to be transformed into stars by a still greater degree of condensation. Thus it is plausible, on the one hand, that the stars which now exist are the result of extreme condensation from an originally nebulous substance; and on the other hand, that real stars are continually in the progress of formation. We may add, with a particular degree of emphasis, that indeed Sir William Herschel, induced by the results of his comparison of the nebulæ of Orion, in 1780, 1783, and 1811, confidently proclaimed "that he had proved the existence of changes"; and "had surprised nature in the midst of her secret operations."

Nor do the conclusions and inferences, which this theory justifies, recommend it less convincingly to our attention. It accounts for a variety of extraordinary facts, which it would be difficult to explain, namely, why the sun occupies the centre of the system,

as the source of light and heat; and why almost all the planets move in the same direction, from west to east, and nearly in the same plane; why they stand in such clear mutual relation and harmonious agreement, that their relative distances, with a curious regularity, proceed nearly in a succession of duplications; why Saturn, that most remarkable of all planets — that "imperishable hieroglyphic" — has both moons and rings; why the satellites follow their planets in the same line[1]; and why the orbits of the planets show such small eccentricity; further, why an almost complete uniformity of clime reigned in the earlier epochs all over the globe, so that both the animal and vegetable life of the arctic regions bore a more tropical character; and why[2] the planets most distant from the sun have the least degree of density, which increases the nearer the planets lie to that centre, since the nearer planets which are of later formation, are parts of a mass more condensed by longer rotation and attraction.

We shall, however, not omit to state, that great astronomical observers incline to the opinion, that all apparent nebulæ might, by increased telescopic power, be resolved into clusters of stars; and that there exists really no essential physical distinction between nebulæ and clusters of stars; that the universe, after the period of its formation, has long arrived at the state of equilibrium, stability, and the regular operation of all-preserving order. It is true that many nebulæ, which seemed irresolvable, have been resolved into stars. In the nebula of Andromeda 1500 stars have been distinguished on the borders, although the nucleus itself has not been dissolved. By the great telescope of Rosse many nebulæ have been examined and resolved, though the celebrated nebula in the sword has resisted its power. But it ought not to be forgotten, that, generally, the same optical instrument which resolves *old* nebulæ into stars reveals *new* ones, defying its analysing force; and that, therefore, Humboldt, for instance, is of opinion that "the number of nebulæ cannot be exhausted by that diminution;" and Arago quotes the words of Sir William Herschel: "There are nebulosities which are not of a starry nature," and speaks of "the celestial matter nearer the elementary state." The matter of the comets is so thin, that even through their nucleus fixed stars are discernible, and their light is thereby not refracted. The comets are, then, the cosmic primitive matter. The different planets and comets exhibit almost all the various phases of condensation, through which the earth has probably passed, in order to arrive from its original condition of liquidity to its present solid state. The immortal astronomer of Slough, who pursued his grand researches with a vigour and devotion commensurate with their sublimity, published, indeed, in 1811, a catalogue of fifty-two diffuse nebulæ, which he believed not to be resolvable. Other astronomers cling to the same opinion with unshaken confidence.

Nor shall we deny, that even this hypothesis leaves difficulties which it is impossible satisfactorily to explain, namely, why the four planets nearer to the sun (Mercury, Venus, Earth, and Mars) follow evidently different laws from the four planets more removed from that centre (Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune); for in the former group the magnitude of the planets increases with their distance from the sun;[3] whilst in the latter group, on the contrary, the size diminishes with the distance, for Jupiter is the greatest of the four, as he, indeed, surpasses all planets in magnitude;[4] further, the former four are deficient in moons or satellites (the Earth alone possesses a moon, the other three have no satellite), whilst the latter four are furnished with a greater

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[1] With the only exception of the moons of Uranus, which move from east to west.

[2] Again with the exception of Uranus.

[3] With the exception, however, of Mars, which is only greater than Mercury, but smaller than Venus and the Earth.

[4] Being 1414 times the volume of the earth, and having a surface of about 1200 millions geographical square miles.

number of moons and rings;[5] and lastly, the former are of five times greater density, and of two or three times slower axial revolution, than the latter. It is therefore scarcely possible to avoid the conclusion, that we have here two quite different families of planets, essentially distinct in their organisation and composition. This conclusion seems to gain additional consistency from the fact, that between these two groups is found another class of planets, the Asteroids, or Planetoids,[6] fundamentally distinct from either. They are remarkable both by their extraordinary smallness,[7] and their eccentric and marvellously complicated orbits. There are other facts besides, which are, at least, not necessarily accounted for by the nebular hypothesis, namely, why all the moons, however different in themselves and in their distances from the sun, yet appear all of exactly the same size, if viewed from that centre.[8]

But all these questions do not affect the nebular theory as a whole; it is recognised by the greatest natural philosophers as affording an acceptable basis for further investigations, which, it is hoped, will gradually remove the difficulties to which we have alluded, and will prove the correctness of that hypothesis in its details and its inferences. Buffon proposed the theory, that a comet fell obliquely into the sun; that the torrent of fluid matter which it impelled before it, formed, by concentration, our planets; and that there were, therefore, in the beginning, burning substances in a complete state of fluidity, which cooled down during 75,000 years to their present state; and will, after the lapse of other 93,000 years, have fallen to the freezing-point, when all life will perish from the earth. But even this theory, although by far more questionable, on account of the doubtful agency of the comet, is, on the whole, in harmony with that of Laplace, as it likewise assumes a physical cause for the immediate formation of the planets. Now, if we compare the details of this hypothesis with the Biblical narrative, and consider that the process of condensation of nebulous matter is infinitely slow; that millenniums are required to compress the extremely diffused mass round one nucleus; that between this process and the formation of planets again lies an interval of endless ages; that the earth itself had to pass through many stages of vast duration till it reached its present condition; that the time required for the cooling down of our planet from its original fiery condition to its present temperature, or from 2,000° to 200° C., amounts, according to some chemists, to 353 millions of years; or that, certainly, since the time when a tropical clime reigned in our countries, a period of one million of years has elapsed: if we bear in mind that the microscopic observations show the same progress of conglomeration constantly and uninterruptedly continued in the infinitude of space; and if, in order to adduce at once the highest scientific authority, according to Humboldt, "creating in its strict sense, as an act of a self-conscious will, and formation, as the beginning of existence after non-existence, *are both beyond our conceptions and our experience*": if we reflect on all these circumstances, there seems indeed to be no alternative left, but honestly to acknowledge the immense difference existing between the Biblical conceptions and the established results of the natural sciences. But we need not apprehend thereby to lose or endanger what is eternal in the Scriptures. It is only necessary to

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[5] Of Jupiter have hitherto been observed four moons; of Saturn, besides his ring, eight moons; of Uranus, six, and perhaps eight, according to Lassell; of Neptune, two: twenty in all.

[6] Flora, Victoria, Vesta, Iris, etc. They amount at present (April, 1857) to forty-three in number (the forty-third was discovered by Mr. Pogson, of Oxford; it is of 9¼ magnitude, and is about two degrees north, preceding the planet Iris); thirty-nine of them were discovered within the last ten years, and thirty-three since 1850; Hygiea is the Asteroid nearest to Jupiter.

[7] The greatest of them is not more than 145 geogr. miles in diameter, that is $\frac{1}{12}$ of the earth.

[8] *i.e.*, seventeen minutes in diameter.

pursue their exposition with the same vigour and energy, with the same unwearied attention and eager research, which characterise the natural philosophers of our time. The Bible has no more dangerous enemies than those who, either from indolence and apathy, or from fanaticism and bigoted zeal, are deaf to the teachings and warnings of the other sciences ; and those men, however well-meaning or warm-hearted, must be made mainly answerable if the authority of the Scriptures should be disregarded by the most enlightened and most comprehensive minds. We shall, in the concluding part of this treatise, have occasion to dwell more fully on this momentous subject.

But lest there remain the least indistinctness or doubt, we shall here insert a concise outline of the Biblical views on the earth and the celestial bodies; after which we shall give a rapid sketch of the universe, such as it is taught by modern astronomy. Thus the reader will be enabled to make, in a safe and easy manner, the most instructive comparison between both systems. It is our utmost desire to do the fullest justice to both: and, as regards the Scriptural conceptions, we are so deeply impressed with their grandeur, their purity, and their sublime beauty, that they cannot lose their own peculiar value even by contrast with the grandest of all sciences.

IV.—THE BIBLICAL VIEWS ON THE EARTH AND THE UNIVERSE.

The fullest picture of the Hebrew notions concerning the nature, construction, and shape of heaven and earth, is found in the first chapters of Genesis. But even this picture is drawn in very faint outlines; we are compelled to complete it by the scanty notices scattered through the various other books of the Bible; an accidental and often obscure allusion must be accepted instead of more direct and more exact information; and the science of Hebrew cosmogony is thus left to the multiform conjectures of imaginative minds. The Hebrews were, indeed, deeply susceptible of the beauties of nature; but they seized it as a whole, without analyzing it in its parts; it was to them the grand work of the One God, and it reflected His majesty; it filled their minds with a reverential feeling, but tempted not their intellects to a scientific research; nature has neither power nor life of its own, but owes all to the Mind that created it; it is the herald of His omnipotence and wisdom, the visible garment of His grandeur, the perpetual proclaimer of His glory; but all its wonders have their end and aim only in man; for him they have been created, both to rouse him by their sublimity to an enraptured contemplation, and, by contrast with his own weakness and transitoriness, to call forth within him the salutary feeling of humility: thus, the poetical descriptions of nature have their distinct tendency and their clear boundaries; though soaring, they are free from wild ejaculation; though abounding in luxuriant imagination, they are controlled by lucid thought; though fervid and impassioned in feeling, they are under the dominion of a dignified, moderate, and measured diction: image, thought, and language, stand in most perfect harmony. But however excellent such productions are for deducing the religious and general literary character of a nation, they contribute little to ascertain its notions of the cosmos. It is, therefore, extremely difficult to arrive at a distinct view of this part of Biblical antiquities. Strict practical science was neither in the mental disposition of the ancient Hebrews, nor was it in the tendency and end of their sacred books; both their national character and their literature were developed in a very different direction. We shall, however, in the following brief remarks, try to concentrate those fragmentary notices.

1. The Heaven.

The heaven is regarded as a canopy or a curtain, spread over the earth in such infinite distance, that men appear from thence "like grasshoppers"; it is a tent for the

habitation of God.[1] It is immeasurable.[2] It is strong and massive, like "a molten mirror";[3] but not brazen, like the Homeric heaven; it resembles the mirror chiefly with regard to its bright splendour;[4] for it is like pellucid sapphire,[5] or like crystal.[6] This vault has a gate, through which the angels descend to the earth,[7] or through which the prophets beheld their heavenly visions.[8] It has, further, windows[9] or doors,[10] through which the rain and dew, snow and hail, treasured up in the clouds above,[11] and held together in those spheres by the will of God, pour down upon the earth at His command; by which the tempests also, there confined in apartments,[12] are let loose; and through which the lightning flashes, either as a symbol of Divine omnipotence, or as a messenger of Divine wrath.[13] In the heaven or firmament, the sun, the moon, and the stars are fixed, to send their light to the earth and its inhabitants, and to regulate the seasons;[14] hence the heaven is described as exercising power or government over the earth,[15] since the phenomena of the air also are controlled by its influence.[16] Beyond this illumined canopy reigns darkness, which the Divine wisdom has, with a nice distinction, separated from the regions of light.[17] But above it is a sphere of liquid stores; here dwells God,[18] for here He has framed His chambers; here is His sanctuary, His palace, the place of His glory;[19] from hence He traverses the world on the wings of the wind and in the chariot of the clouds;[20] for the heaven is His throne, and the earth is His footstool.[21] That whole vault is supported by mighty pillars or foundations,[22] resting on the earth; and thus heaven and earth are marked as one majestic edifice, forming the universe. — We need scarcely to observe, that many of these notions, especially those concerning the abode of the Deity, are rather poetical metaphors than the real conceptions of the Hebrews; and although some of them might be the remnants of mythic times, others are certainly figurative expressions. It was a belief common and popular among almost all ancient nations, that at the summit of the shadow of the earth, or on the top of the highest mountain of the earth, which reaches with its crest into heaven, and from whence the whole earth can be surveyed at one glance, the gods have their palace or hall of assembly; thus,[23] the Babylonians imagined, in the uppermost north, the "Mountain of Meeting"; it was called *Albordsh*, was considered as the chief residence of Ormuzd, and the source of his radiant light; and was most likely believed to be identical with the high mountains of the Caucasus. Thus, the Greeks had their *Olympus* (and Atlas); the Hindoos their *Meru*, also called Sabha, or mountain of congregation; the Chinese their *Kulkun* (or Kuen-lun), which is "the king of mountains, the highest part of all the earth, the mountain which touches the pole and supports the heavens"; the Arabians their *Caf*, and the Parsees their *Tireh*. That similar notions were entertained by the Israelites is improbable, as they rest essentially on polytheistic ideas; and a "Mountain of Meeting" is absurd for One all-pervading, omnipresent God, whose "glory the heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain"; but to identify Mount Meru with Mount Moriah is one of those vain conjectures which sacrifice a whole religious system to an accidental resemblance of names.

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[1] Ps. civ. 2; Isai. xl. 22.
[2] Jer. xxxi. 37.
[3] Job xxxvii. 18.
[4] Dan. xii. 3.
[5] Exod. xxiv. 10.
[6] Revel. iv. 6; comp. Ezek. i. 22.
[7] Gen. xxviii. 17.
[8] Ezek. i. 1.
[9] Gen. vii. 11; 2 Kings vii. 2, 19; Isai. xxiv. 18.
[10] Ps. lxxviii. 23.
[11] Gen. i. 7; Job xxvi. 8; Ps. cxlviii. 4; Prov. viii. 28.
[12] Job xxxvii. 9.
[13] Job xxxvii; xxxviii. 22 *et seq.*; Ezek. xiii. 13; Sir. xliii. 14 *et seq.*
[14] Gen. i. 14—19.
[15] Job xxxviii. 33.
[16] Ver. 36.
[17] Job xxvi. 10.
[18] Psal. xxix. 10; Job xxvi. 9.
[19] Ps. xi. 4; Ezek. iii. 12.
[20] Ps. civ. 3; Ezek. i. 26.
[21] Isai. lxvi. 1.
[22] Job xxvi. 11; 2 Sam. xxii. 8.
[23] According to Isai. xiv. 13.

2. The Sun.

The Sun is the "greater luminary" placed in the firmament of heaven to rule the day;[1] it is the result of the concentrated light diffused through space on the first day of creation.[2] It is made, like the other celestial orbs, only for the sake and the benefit of the earth, to give light to its inhabitants, to produce vegetation,[3] and to mark the division between day and night. The sun was believed to move from east to west, encompassing in his course the whole universe.[4] At the western boundary of the heaven, where the latter was considered to touch the border of the earth, the sun has a tent, where he enters in the evening, rests over night, and whence he emerges in the morning with renewed vigour, like a hero, to recommence his brilliant career with the bloom and freshness of a bridegroom.[5] Hence we can understand why the sun is, in Hebrew, said to "go out" when he rises, and to "come in" when he disappears beneath the horizon. It is as an awful sign of God's wrath if He takes away the light of the sun, and sends eclipses; when night envelopes the earth in the hours of day,[6] and the sun is changed into darkness and gloom.[7] It is always the portentous forerunner of a fearful disaster. Those eclipses were believed to be caused by the mighty dragon, which ensnares the disc, but which might be frightened away by the spell of conjurors,[8] or pierced by the hand of God.[9] This remarkable astronomical notion was prevalent amongst most of the Eastern nations. The sun is among the most wonderful, the most magnificent works of God; he is a chief instrument of His glory, an everlasting witness of His majesty,[10] and an emblem of His all-pervading goodness.[11] Even Plato observes, that the eyes of man, by contemplating the heavenly bodies, must guide him to the knowledge of the Deity; and Luther considered it as the strongest proof of the immortality of the soul, that it can rise above the earth, and explore the marvellous course of the celestial orbs. It is, therefore, not astonishing that the Israelites were, during many periods of their history, seduced by surrounding idolators to worship the sun; they had a chariot and horses of the sun;[12] they revered him by burning incense to him on the roofs of their houses,[13] and they erected statues in his honour.[14] Even the pious Job finds it necessary to protest that the grandeur and brilliancy of the celestial orbs did not tempt him to a criminal worship.[15] Moses interdicts it repeatedly;[16] and the first chapter of Genesis implies, with peculiar emphasis, that sun, moon and stars are the work of God, appointed and controlled by Him, dependent on His will, and serving His designs.

God has for all time fixed the course of the sun;[17] these innate laws give to him the appearance as if he knew his path,[18] or as if he spontaneously hastened to reach his daily-prescribed goal;[19] but he stands yet under the sovereign will of God, who sometimes suspends his course, or interrupts those laws.[20] His rise is preceded by a dawn and the dew-fall;[21] he seizes the borders of the earth;[22] then bounds cheerfully above the horizon; gilds first the peaks of the mountains;[23] the fearful beasts of prey, which had howlingly traversed the forests in search of booty, retire to their caverns and hiding-places;[24] and the wicked men, who sought to profit by the cloak of night for their evil deeds, disperse and disappear;[25] till at last the light, with its wings,[26] or its eye-lids,[27] illumines with splendour the whole earth, and the towns and the objects of

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[1] Gen. i. 14—19. [2] Vers. 3—5.
[3] Deut. xxxiii. 14.
[4] Isai. xlv. 6; Ps. l. 1.
[5] Ps. xix. 5—7; comp. Hab. iii. 11.
[6] Amos viii. 9. [7] Joel iii. 4; iv. 15.
[8] Job iii. 8. [9] Ib. xvi. 11—13.
[10] Ps xix. 2; Sir. xliii. 2, 5.
[11] Matt. v, 45. [12] 2 Kings xxiii. 11.
[13] Jer. xix. 13; Zeph. i. 5.
[14] Lev. xxvi. 30; Isai. xvii. 8.
[15] Job xxxi. 26.
[16] Deut. iv. 19; xvii. 3.
[17] Ps. lxxiv. 17. [18] Ib. civ. 19.
[19] Eccl. i. 5,
[20] Josh. x. 12—14; Isai. xxxviii 8.
[21] Ps. cx. 3. [22] Job xxxviii. 13, 19.
[23] Joel ii. 2. [24] Ps. civ. 21, 22.
[25] Job xxxviii. 13.
[26] Ps. cxxxix. 9.
[27] Job iii. 9.

nature, which had been buried in indistinguishable confusion, appear in their beautiful proportions.[28] Therefore the sun serves as a metaphor for youth, beauty, and bloom,[29] and his light for happiness and joy.[30] He reaches his highest elevation and his greatest power at noon;[31] then the heat of the day is greatest, and the light has a double brilliancy, that of the ascending and declining sun;[32] it often causes the sun-stroke,[33] and is dangerous by its excess;[34] the rays burn many times more fiercely than a blazing furnace, and are especially fatal to the eyes.[35] Gradually the magnificent orb declines; the heat loses its intensity, and the light its dazzling brilliancy; the shadows grow longer; light and darkness begin to *mix*, and the evening is followed by the gloom and silence of the night.[36]

3. The Moon.

The moon is the "lesser luminary," which rules the night. She is chiefly intended to indicate the lapse of the months;[37] and her four distinct phases have, no doubt, at an early time suggested the division of the month into four weeks, or periods of seven days.[38] Her mild, beneficent rays, still more beautiful in the pure, transparent Eastern sky, illumine the sombre darkness of night, and cheer the lonely paths of the wanderer. But she sometimes also causes destruction; for the power of her rays were considered dangerous to man.[39] The festivals were based upon her course; the day of the new-moon was solemnized with sacred rites and social festivities:[40] the whole religious year was regulated after her motion, and she was therefore not only an object of importance, but of sacredness, in the eyes of the Israelites. Hence it may be accounted for, that the idolatrous worship of the moon found easy access into Palestine from the Pagan nations; she was revered as the "Queen of heaven;[41] various sacrifices and libations were offered to her, and the Hebrew women especially devoted themselves to this forbidden service; in fact, the whole ritual of the Phoenician goddess Astarte, with whom that "Queen of Heaven" is identical, and who was the goddess of fertility, seems to have been transferred to her. But there are some other ancient notions concerning the moon, which at least are not traceable in the Biblical writings. The new-moon was believed to be fatal to the fruits and harvests; the frosts of the night and other agricultural damages were attributed to the influence of the moon; her rays were deemed most injurious to the eye-sight; it was curiously maintained that she is "the star of human life," controlling and tempering the vital humours and the blood of the body; that the shell-fish grow with her increase; and that she, in general, exercised a sovereign power over all things: whilst the Hindoos, who believed the moon to consist of water, thought that the rain descended from that orb. Even in our own time, the moon has not ceased to be endowed with certain mysterious influences upon man and his affairs; and many vulgar superstitions emanate from that source. By the ancients the moon was considered as one of the seven known planets, and one day of the week received its name from her.

4. The Stars.

The Stars are the companions of the moon in the evening sky;[42] they surround her to enhance her magic brilliancy, or shine to replace it; their nature as distant suns, or as planets of the solar system, was not yet known; no distinction between fixed stars,

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[28] Job xxxviii. 14, 15.
[29] Cant. vi. 10; Sir. l. 6, 7.
[30] Job xi. 17; Ps. xcvii. 11.
[31] Prov. iv. 18.
[32] 1 Sam. xi. 9; 2 Sam. iv. 5; Neh. vii. 3; Isai. xvi. 3.
[33] 2 Kings iv. 18 *et seq.*
[34] Jon. iv. 8; Ps. cxxi. 6.
[35] Sir. xliii. 4.
[36] Ps. civ. 20.
[37] Gen. i. 14.
[38] See Notes on Exodus, p. 344.
[39] Psalm cxxi. 6. Compare the words "moon-stricken," "lunatic," etc.
[40] 2 Kings, iv. 23; Isa. i. 13, 14.
[41] Jer. vii. 18; xliv. 17, 25.
[42] Gen. i. 16.

planets, and comets, is ever alluded to; nor was the whole wonderful economy of the starry worlds, revealed by modern astronomy, understood or remotely suspected. The stars are affixed to the firmament: they will therefore share its fate at the destruction of heaven,[1] they existed before the foundation of the earth; they were then already inhabited by angels, or "sons of God," who accompanied that great act of Divine omnipotence with shouting and rejoicing.[2] But they were not considered themselves as animated beings, as the Persians, and several other heathen nations, and even some fathers of the church, believed; if life is attributed to them, it is only with regard to those glorious inhabitants; thus they fight in the combats of the Lord;[3] they are His army, His troops,[4] they are the "host of heaven: but this expression is used promiscuously for the stars and angels.[5] God is, therefore, "the Lord of Hosts" (*Zebaoth*), both with reference to the former and the latter;[6] He preserves peace and harmony in those heavenly worlds by His awful power.[7] The stars are, therefore, unable to help or to save; it is folly and perversity to worship them, or to invoke their aid;[8] they owe their brilliancy not to their own power, but to the will of God who made heaven and earth.[9] The stars are numberless; they are used to express an infinite multitude;[10] but God knows the names of all; He leads them out every morning and numbers them, and never has one been missed.[11] Only a few names of stars occur in the Biblical canon: the *Zodiac*;[12] the *Great Bear*,[13] with the three stars in his tail;[14] *Orion*,[15] the fool or impious man, probably Nimrod, fettered in the firmament as a punishment; and *the Pleiades*, in the neck of the Bull;[16] further, *Draco*, between the Great and the Little Bear;[17] and *Gemini* or *Twins*, in the border of the milky way.[18] Besides these we find mentioned the planets *Jupiter*;[19] *Mars*;[20] *Venus*, the morning-star, or the *brilliant* planet;[21] and *Mercury*.[22] In the later times of the Hebrew commonwealth, the Israelites were made better acquainted with astronomical observations; the computation of the Mosaic festivals obliged them especially to study the course of the moon; and in the Talmudical writings occur many subtle and sagacious astronomical calculations. The superstition of reading the destiny of man in the stars never took root among the Israelites; astrology is excluded by the first principle of Mosaism, the belief in one all-ruling God, who is subject to no necessity, no fate, no other will. Jeremiah[23] warns the Hebrews not to be afraid of the "signs of heaven," before which the heathens tremble in vain terror; and Isaiah[24] speaks with taunting irony against the "astrologers, star-gazers, and monthly prognosticators," in whose counsel it is folly and wickedness to rely.[25] But the Israelites had not moral strength enough to resist the example of star-worship in general; they could not keep aloof from an aberration which formed the very focus of the principal Eastern religions; they yielded to that tempting influence; and ignominious incense rose profusely in honour of the sun and the hosts of heaven.[26]

5. The Earth.

The Earth forms, according to Biblical notions, the centre of the world, or, rather, its only habitable part; the heavens, with the sun and the whole astral canopy, exist

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[1] Isa. xxxiv. 4; 2 Pet. iii. 12.
[2] Job xxxviii. 7.
[3] Judg. v. 20.
[4] Job xxv. 3.
[5] Comp. Ps. cxlviii. 2; 2 Chron. xviii. 18.
[6] Isa. xxiv. 21.
[7] Job xxv. 2.
[8] Job xxxi. 26—28.
[9] Deut. iv. 19.
[10] Deut. i. 10; Nah. iii. 16.
[11] Isa. xl. 26.
[12] Job xxxviii. 32; 2 Kings xxiii. 5.
[13] Job ix. 9.
[14] Job xxxviii. 32.
[15] Amos v. 8; Job xxxviii. 31.
[16] Job ix. 9; Amos v. 8.
[17] Job xxvi. 13.
[18] Acts xxviii. 11.
[19] *Gad*; Isa. lxv. 11.
[20] *Nergal*; 2 Kings xvii. 30.
[21] Isa. xiv. 12; Rev. ii. 28; or *Meni*, Isa. lxv. 11.
[22] *Nebo*; Isa. xlvi. 1.
[23] x. 2, 3.
[24] xlvii. 13.
[25] Comp. Jer. v. 24; Dan. ii. 27.
[26] Jer. xix. 13; Ezek. viii. 16; Zeph. i. 5; Wis. xiii. 2.

merely for the use and in the service of the earth. This is, among almost all ancient nations, the first purely optical, unscientific view; and not only Plato, but even Ovid, expresses it in distinct terms: "The earth has been placed in the very middle of the universe," .... "in which position it is kept by its perfect roundness, not pressing on one part more than the other."[1] It stands for ever, though the generations of men pass away and disappear.[2] It rests on foundations, or pillars,[3] so that it never moves;[4] except when God, in His anger, makes it tremble, and in His wrath overthrows or dislocates mountains.[5] But no human wisdom has ever explored the basement on which these pillars are erected, or has discovered the place where the cornerstone of the earth is hidden.[6] However, we are taught that our planet is founded on the seas,[7] or spread out over waters,[8] and that God even marked out the circumference of the earth over the aqueous depths;[9] a notion which, though kindred, is not identical with that of the Greeks, of a vast insular plain, encircled by the sea Oceanus. Or we are led to suppose, more in harmony with our modern ideas, that the earth is hanging "upon nothing," or "upon the empty space;"[10] corresponding with the doctrine of many of the old Greek poets, "that the vast earth hangs in the open space of the air, and that one earth cannot stand upon another earth."[11] The proportions, dimensions, and shape of the earth defy equally the understanding of man.[12] Whether it was regarded as a large disc, or as a square plain, is not quite evident; but it has certainly borders, extremities, and even *ends*, and *gates*.[13] Nor can we with safety deduce from some uncertain and disputed expressions in Ezekiel,[14] that the Israelites considered Palestine as the centre of the whole earth, a notion which certainly prevailed among the later Jews and Christians. Similar ideas were held by other ancient nations; the Greeks believed Delphi to be the centre or *navel* of the earth; Xenophon asserts the same of Athens; Statius of Mount Parnassus; Pliny of Abydus; the Scythians of their country; and the Arabians of Sarandib, or Ceylon; China is called the "empire of the middle;" and Media received this name because it was believed to be situated in the centre of Asia. The surface of the earth was described after the four cardinal points; and as the east, or sunrise, was considered as the region *before* the face, west is that which lies *behind*; south is the *right* hand, and north the *left* hand; which manner of designating the parts of the globe is exactly the same among the Hindoos and in Ireland, and was sometimes applied by the Romans. The north was considered to be higher than the south; therefore going from north to south is, in Biblical language, called *to descend*; from south to north, *to ascend*. The west was regarded as the remotest part;[15] the north as the most concealed region —the most mountainous, and, therefore, most ponderous part;[16] and as including the gold-lands,[17] which other ancient nations likewise placed in the hidden north. The earth itself was divided into dry land and sea,[18] or into dry land and islands;[19] and was distributed among the descendants of Shem, Ham, and Japhet, in the manner which will be described in our notes on the tenth chapter. It furnishes food, and supports all living beings; and is, therefore, called "the productive earth."

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[1] Fast. vi. 271—276; *Plato*, Phæd. 132.
[2] Eccl. i. 4; see, however, *infra*.
[3] Ps. lxxv. 4; Enoch xviii. 2.
[4] Ps. xciii. 1, xcvi. 10, civ. 5, cxix. 90.
[5] Job ix. 5, 6; Psalm xviii. 8.
[6] Job xxxviii. 6; Prov. viii. 29; Jer. xxxi. 37.
[7] Ps. xxiv. 2.
[8] Ps. cxxxvi. 6.
[9] Prov. viii. 27.
[10] Job xxvi. 7.
[11] *Lucret.* ii. 602, 603; comp. *Ovid*, Fast. vi. 269, 270.
[12] Job xxxviii. 4, 5.
[13] Jer. xv. 7.
[14] v. 5, and xxxviii. 12.
[15] Jon. i. 3; Ps. cxxxix. 9.
[16] Job xxvi. 7.
[17] Job xxxvii. 22.
[18] Gen. i. 9, 10; Jon. i. 9.
[19] Esth. x. 1; Ps. xcvii. 1.

6. The Seas.

The Seas are the gatherings of water, which were, on the third day of creation, concentrated on some parts of the earth's surface, so that, on others, the dry land became visible.[1] They are enclosed in rocky basins.[2] Their sources are in the deep interior of the earth, from which they break forth with violence.[3] But nobody can fathom their depths, much less descend to those sources, which reach down to the very "gates of death."[4] The sea is, therefore, a figurative expression for everything infinite or gigantic. The omniscience of God reaches to its ground,[5] or beyond its extremities;[6] His wisdom is as immeasurable as the extent of the sea;[7] sins are pardoned as if they were sunk to its bottom;[8] the unspeakable misery of the dispersed children of Jacob is inexhaustible as the sea.[9] Yet God may, in His anger, lay bare the bottom of the sea, and make visible the foundations of the earth.[10] A part of the floods retired beneath the earth, to form its foundation, or the base over which it is spread;[11] and beneath these waters is the hell, or Sheol, the abode of the departed spirits — the "house of meeting for all living."[12] The Sheol is not at the bottom of the seas; for the *earth* opened itself to devour Korah and his associates, and to hurl him into the Sheol.[13] All the rivers of the earth are a part of the sea; and as everything which is of the earth returns to the earth, so all the rivers go back into the sea,[14] which thus for ever remains unaltered in magnitude.[15] The waves of the ocean are, by the all-powerful hand of God, checked within their ordained boundaries;[16] and although their rage strives restlessly to overflow the shores, and to inundate and immerse the earth again, they are impotent against the will of God;[17] He has shut them up with gates and bars. Tempests might rouse its surface;[18] the billows might tower up in unbridled violence;[19] their tumult and their roaring are in vain;[20] for God spoke to the sea: "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here the fury of thy waves shall be stayed."[21] Clouds and mists hover above its surface, covering it like a garment;[22] and vast sand-plains border its coasts;[23] it is peopled with an endless variety of beings, from the harmless and useful fish to the majestic leviathan and the fearful monsters; but all are lovingly sustained by the providing care of God.[24] They are partly created for the use of man;[25] partly for the glory of God.[26] But water is a frequent Scriptural metaphor for misery and misfortune, or for dreary confusion.[27] In the time of the chaos, water covered the whole earth; it was a sign of the loving care of God that it receded from some parts; therefore it is promised, that in the new heaven and the new earth the water will altogether disappear; there will be no more sea.[28]

These are the chief notions of the Bible regarding the individual parts of the Cosmos. A few remarks on the universe, as a whole, will complete this sketch.

Heaven and earth, which comprise the created universe, are eternal, their laws are unchangeable.[29] But they are only eternal compared with the frailty and transitory existence of man; "generation cometh, and generation goeth; but the earth standeth

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[1] Gen. i. 9, 10.
[2] Isa. xi. 9; Hab. ii. 14.
[3] Job xxxviii. 8, 16; comp. Gen. vii. 11.
[4] Job xxxviii. 16, 17.
[5] Amos ix. 3.
[6] Ps. cxxxix. 9.
[7] Job xi. 9; comp. Deut. xxx. 13.
[8] Micah vii. 19.
[9] Lament. ii. 13.
[10] Ps. xviii. 15.
[11] Ps. xxiv. 2, cxxxvi. 6; 2 Sam xxii. 16.
[12] Job xxvi. 5, xxx. 23; Isa. xiv. 9.
[13] Num. xvi. 30, 33; Isa. xxxviii. 10.
[14] Sir. xlii.
[15] Eccl. i. 7.
[16] Job xxvi. 10.
[17] Ps. lxxxix. 10.
[18] Dan. vii. 2; Jon. i. 11, 13.
[19] Isa. v. 30; Jer. vi. 23; Ps. xcvi. 11.
[20] Sir. xliii. 25.
[21] Job xxxviii. 8, 11; comp. Prov. viii. 28, 29.
[22] Job xxxviii. 9.
[23] Gen. xxii. 17; Job xxix. 18; Hos. ii. 1.
[24] Ps. civ. 25—28; James iii. 7; compare Ps. cxlvii. 9.
[25] Gen. ix. 2; comp. Lev. xi. 9.
[26] Ps. civ. 26; Job xl. 25 *et seq*; Sir. xliii. 27.
[27] Ps. lxix. 2, 3, 16; xviii. 17.
[28] Revel. xxi. 1.
[29] Jer. xxxi. 35, 36; Ps. lxxxix. 37, 38; cxlviii. 6.

for ever."[1] Measured by the inconceivable eternity of God, or by the endlessness of His love, or the immutability of His Word, the stars of heaven will wither like the dry leaves of the vine or the fig;[2] the firmament will vanish like smoke, and the earth will decay like a garment.[3] God, who has created the world, is its Lord; He allows it to exist only so long as His profound designs demand it; the Mind rules the matter. He does not tremble that the heavens will once be destroyed by the flames, as the heathen gods, who stand under the rule of fate, constantly feared.[4] He will, in due season, Himself effect that awful consummation for the punishment of the impious,[5] but only to create a new heaven and a new earth;[6] and a time will be, when the light of the moon will be like that of the sun, and the light of the sun seven times greater, or like the light of seven days;[7] and the new Jerusalem will have no need of the sun or of the moon, for the glory of God will illumine it.[8]

We now entreat the reader to compare all these Biblical views with the lessons of astronomy. A very moderate degree of attention will show that both systems are organically and radically different; that their whole character is almost opposite. It is not sufficient to say that both have different ends, and move in different spheres; that the one has an exclusively *religious* tendency, and aims only at the majesty and glory of *God*; whilst the other has a purely *scientific* character, is unconcerned about the First Cause, and explores only the secondary causes: or that the chief end of the former is *man* and his moral excellence, whilst the tendency of the latter is to demonstrate the undeviating necessity of the *physical laws*. This, we repeat, is not sufficient. These might be differences of treatment rather than of conception. But there are other more decided distinctions. The Bible contemplates the objects of nature as they *optically appear* to the unscientific eye, and as they have been observed by almost all unlearned ancient nations; whilst astronomy enters into *their real character*, often against the obvious evidence of the senses, and strives to discover their hidden properties and their marvellous motions: the one is satisfied with phenomena as they *exist* and *are*, whilst the other penetrates into the mysteries of their origin and progress, and has even the courage to anticipate their future changes and their ultimate unavoidable revolutions: the former considers the earth as the principal object of the universe, to which the sun and the stars, which are fixed in the solid expanse of heaven, are subordinate; whilst the latter teaches that the earth is but a most inconsiderable part of the sidereal systems—a part so small that "no arithmetician can assign a fraction low enough to express its proportion to the whole universe"; that it is a subservient link in our solar system; that it is a *celestial* body every way analogous to many of the stars which crowd the heavens; and that, so far from being motionless, it revolves round the sun, its centre, with extraordinary velocity: the one represents the moon as the second great luminous body of the world, to which the stars are scarcely more than mere appendages; whilst the other shows that the moon shines only by borrowed light, and that the stars are objects of infinitely greater importance in the universe than the moon: in the former all plants and animals are created at the same epoch, whilst geology teaches, that the different species belong to periods vastly remote from each other. Every one may pursue these comparisons in further detail, and he will at every step be arrested by the striking contrasts which exist between the Biblical and the astronomical teaching. But let it not be said, that the Bible *intentionally* described the actual objects in so simple and unscientific a manner, in order to adapt itself to the uncultivated understanding of the contemporaries. We shall not urge that the Bible

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[1] Eccl. i. 4.
[2] Isa. xxxiv. 4.
[3] Isa. li. 6; Ps. cii. 27, 28; comp. Lu. xxi. 33; 2 Pet. iii. 7.
[4] *Ovid*, Met. i. 253—257.
[5] 2 Pet. iii. 7.
[6] Isa. lxv. 17; 2 Pet. iii. 13; Rev. xxi. 1.
[7] Isa. xxx. 26.
[8] Rev. xxi. 23.

repeatedly insists, that it was not written for one age and one people, but for all times and all nations; that it must, under that supposition, have assumed that in no future period any nation would advance to more profound researches and more refined culture. But every one sees at once the very dangerous character of that principle. If the Scriptures are not *bonâ fide* truth, but in many important points a convenient accommodation to prevailing absurdities and childish ignorance: where can we with confidence say that they are in earnest, and that their doctrines claim the authority of absolute truth? This would throw open the Bible to uncertainty and doubt in so unparalleled a degree, that it would practically cease to have any definite meaning. And if the sublime acts of creation, as described in the first chapter, are not serious truths, of what other parts can we expect it? If a book, which is intended as a *guide* and a *preceptor*, withholds, on many momentous questions, *designedly* its better knowledge and conviction, it has necessarily forfeited, in a great measure, that esteem and confidence which alone secure its authority. It is, therefore, the first principle of interpretation to suppose, that the Bible expressed *in every respect* and *on all subjects* what it considered to be the truth.

It may, however, be alleged, that the Mosaic legislation, in several instances, evidently accommodated itself to ancient usages. It is true, the law-giver often *adapted* his precepts to existing customs; that is, *he converted falsehood into truth*; he did not simply adopt the pagan views, but he purified and ennobled them; he retained the *form*, which is immaterial, and infused into it a *new spirit*, which alone is essential. The laws on circumcision, the phylacteries, or the sacrifices, are based upon similar rites prevalent among other eastern nations; but they contain nothing which recalls their heathen origin; they are the total reform of customs which it was either impossible or unadvisable to eradicate. Nothing of this nature was done with regard to the physical conceptions. They were, indeed, purified from all superstitious alloy, but their fundamental errors were not corrected: they are more noble, but not more true or exact, than the cosmical systems of other primitive nations.

In order to prove these assertions still more decidedly, we now insert a brief outline of the astronomical results on the nature and economy of the *Universe*. We are induced to do this by the additional consideration, that it becomes a Biblical commentary on the Creation, to show the majestic grandeur of the Creator by the marvellous character of His works.

V.—THE UNIVERSE.

Overwhelming as our solar system is in its vast dimensions, it is a mere point compared with the endless number of fixed stars which fill the infinitude of space. It may astonish us that our sun has a diameter of 192,492 geographical miles; that he is 1,410,000 times greater than the earth; and that his volume amounts to 4,078 millions of cubic miles; that Neptune moves round the sun at a distance of more than 700 millions of geographical miles, and requires 217 years to complete one revolution; and that there are probably other planets beyond Neptune, the remotest of which might be 13,000 millions of geographical miles distant from the sun, and would require 15,000 years to complete its orbit. We may well admiringly ponder over the facts, that there are comets which visit the horizon of our heaven once every 1,500 to 8,000 years, that of 1780 every 75,838 years, and that of 1844 every 100,000 years; that others, describing a parabolic line in their course, will most probably never reappear; that the radius of the head of the comet of 1843 was, on the 28th of March, 47,000 miles, the breadth of its tail 33 millions of miles, and the length 150 millions of miles; and that 600 to 700 comets have already been seen, whilst their probable number has been estimated at one million, or, as Kepler observes, "like fishes in the ocean." But who can suppress a religious awe, if he considers, that the whole

system of our sun, with all its planets, satellites, and comets, moves again, as an inexpressibly small fraction of universal space, round another point (towards the constellation of Hercules), in the same manner as Jupiter and his moons revolve round our sun; so that if the universe has no common central sun, it moves at least round one common centre of gravity, and that there exists no resting or fixed point in the realms of space, but that the whole moves uninterruptedly like "an eternal world-clock"; that the fixed stars form independent systems, some of which resemble our solar system, others, at present about 6000 in number, consist of two, three, or four sidereal bodies of various colours, revolving, at a very small distance from each other, round a common centre of gravity, and often requiring many hundreds, and even thousands, of years to complete their revolution; no doubt accompanied by planets with extremely complicated orbits, and with white, blue, red, and green days: that most probably many luminous bodies, as, for instance, Sirius and Spica, move round large dark masses, which form their centre of gravity; that, according to a very moderate calculation of Sir William Herschel, the milky way alone contains eighteen millions of stars, and the whole heavens 273 millions, of which about 8,000 are visible to the unaided eye, and of which Bessel has calculated the positions of 75,000, and Argeland that of 22,000 more; that the Pleiades contain forty-four visible stars in less than three degrees; that not only our planets, and even our sun, but probably the comets and the numberless satellites of the other suns, are the theatres of organic life; that our sun belongs, with regard to the intensity of light, to the weaker fixed stars, for the power of the light of Sirius is, for instance, sixty-three times greater, although its brightness *appears* to be about 200,000 millions of times less intense than that of the sun; that, by means of the telescope, systems of stars are discovered at a distance of 100,000 billions of miles, and that their light required many thousand years to reach our earth, although it travels nearly 42,000 geographical miles in a second; that, for instance, the star Vega of the Lyre is 41,600 times more distant than the planet Uranus, although this latter is nineteen times more distant from the sun than the earth, namely, 396 millions of geographical miles; which stupendous, inconceivable space may be brought nearer to our comprehension, if we suppose the distance of the earth from the sun to be one foot; then Uranus would be nineteen feet from the sun, and the star Vega thirty-four and a half geographical miles; that one double-star (61 Cygni) is 18,240 times more distant from the sun than Neptune, and 550,900 times more than the earth, that is, more than eleven billions of geographical miles; that the light of certain nebulæ which are nearly twelve millions of miles distant from our system, employs rather more than *a million of years* in reaching us, and that, as Sir William Herschel explicitly remarks, "the rays of light of the remotest nebulæ must have been almost *two millions* of years on their way, and, consequently, so many years ago this object must already have had an existence in the sidereal heavens, in order to send out those rays by which we now perceive it;" the undulations of light proceeding from an unresolvable nebula have been called the oldest witnesses of the existence of matter; they lead back "over a myriad of millenniums" into the depths of primeval time; and many heavenly objects have long vanished before they reach us, whilst others have assumed a different character. More than twenty new stars have been observed appearing and disappearing; for instance, in the year 1572 the star of Tycho Brahé was seen in the constellation of Cassiopeia; it surpassed Sirius, Jupiter, and Venus in brilliancy; it was distinguished even at day-time, and remained at night visible even through clouds of considerable density; but it vanished in March, 1574, without trace, after having shone for seventeen months; its light was, in succession, resplendently white, yellow, red, and whitish pale. Similar phenomena occurred in 1600 with a star in the constellation of Cygnus, and in 1604 with one at the foot of Ophiuchus; both of them were brighter than stars of the first magnitude:

the former remained during twenty-one years in the firmament. Kepler and Tycho, anticipating the theory of Laplace, declared these new stars to be the result of recent agglomeration of the cosmic nebulæ, which fill the space of heaven. A new star of the sixth magnitude was discovered so late as the 28th of March, 1848, by Hind; in 1850 it appeared only as a star of the eleventh magnitude, and approached its disappearance. In the year 1845, the comet of Bila divided itself before our eyes into two comets of similar shape, both consisting of nucleus and tail, but of unequal dimensions; so that it might be asked, if similar processes are not of possible daily occurrence. "Does the number of stars," asks Arago, "sensibly increase from year to year, either because new stars are in the course of forming, or because the light of the most remote has not had time to arrive at the earth since the beginning of creation?" But without dilating upon the "periodic stars," that is, those the brilliancy of which varies periodically, even the brightness of the stars is not constant: the light is diminishing in some; it has been entirely extinguished in others; and is continually increasing in others.

The nebulous matter above alluded to is spread through the whole immensity of space in very different degrees of density and luminosity, as nebulæ incapable of being further resolved into stars, planetary nebulæ, or nebulous stars; and in very different shapes, partly globular, partly annular and spiral; and these nebular stars especially tend to convince us that "stars are incessantly forming"; that we are present at the slow progressive birth of new "suns." One of them (which was observed on the 6th of January, 1785), if its centre coincided with that of the sun, would encompass with its atmosphere the orbit of Uranus, and extend eight times beyond! Sir William and Sir John Herschel furnished two lists of not less than 3,538 nebulæ, and 338 clusters of stars. They form a huge zone which, it is believed, engirds, as the greatest circle, the whole heaven, and cuts, perhaps, the stars of the milky way almost perpendicularly. Between 10,000 and 20,000 stars appear frequently compressed within a nebula, the diameter of which is not more than six to eight minutes. By far the greater number of nebulæ are crowded together in the *northern* hemisphere, where they irregularly spread through many constellations; whilst, in the southern heavens, they are both less frequent and more uniformly distributed: the region of the south-pole itself is poor in stars; and no pole-star is there visible to the naked eye. But many of those nebulæ are still shapeless masses of matter of the vastest dimensions, not yet formed into bodies or stars; they extend frequently over several degrees. According to the observations of the Earl of Rosse, one of these cosmic nebulæ, occupying only eight degrees, must have the enormous diameter of 200 millions geographical miles! The planetary nebulæ in the Great Bear are probably diffused through a sphere the diameter of which is seven times greater than the orbit which Neptune circumscribes, and which is 747 millions of geographical miles. And if we, in conclusion, remind our readers of that most extraordinary of all nebulæ, in the Orion, which has since the last two centuries engaged the attention of almost all astronomers, with a light apparently changing from blazing flames to complete blackness; and of those dark clouds in the southern hemisphere of the heaven, called Magellanic clouds, which filled Sir John Herschel with speechless astonishment, which he considered as an irregular aggregate of stars and round clusters of nubeculæ, varying in dimensions and density, and of vast tracts of "star-dust"; and which, on account of the extraordinary variety of elements of which they consist, was called "an epitome of the whole starred heaven" — if we combine these and the preceding facts, we might well, in adoration of the Creator, exclaim, with humble reverence: "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament tells the work of His hands."[1]

[1] Ps. xix. 2; comp. viii. 2; Job xxxvi. 26; xxxviii. 4, 5.

"These are Thy glorious works, Parent of good —
Almighty! Thine this universal frame,
Thus wondrous fair! Thyself how wondrous then
Unspeakable! who sitt'st above these heavens
To us invisible, or dimly seen
In these Thy lowest works; yet these declare
Thy goodness beyond thought, and power divine."—(*Milton*, Par. L., b.v.)

We are now sufficiently advanced in our proofs and arguments, to be enabled to draw the practical conclusions: but one essential point in connection with the history of creation remains to be discussed; namely, the origin and nature of man, the crowning work of the six days. Hoping, therefore, that the reader will not lose the thread of this inquiry, we shall here introduce a few remarks, comparing the Scriptural notices on the origin of man with the evidence of the various sciences connected with that subject.

VI. — THE CREATION OF MAN.

If, in the words of a modern poet, "the proper study of mankind is man," it is a satisfactory circumstance, that, with regard to the origin and diffusion of the human race, Scripture and science are less at variance. The statements of the former have, on the whole, been confirmed by the latter in a surprising degree; and we may expect similar results from the future investigations of the ethnographic sciences.

1. The Mosaic narrative teaches that man was the latest act of God's creating energy. The researches of geology have led to the same result. Remains of human forms or works are found in no formation that can be called stratified, not even in the newest Tertiary beds, except those nearest to our present surface; man did not exist before the present condition of the earth. The history of our planet's crust reveals a progressive continuity of creations, the highest of which is man; he is the most perfect of all organic beings; he was framed to strive after virtue and to enjoy happiness; therefore he was not created before the earth offered him a fit abode; not before the plains and valleys were adorned with the charms of a rich vegetation, nor before the air, the waters, and the forests were peopled with animals destined to serve his use or to bear his yoke.

2. The cradle of the human race is in the central region of Western Asia. This Biblical statement is more and more ratified by every progress of ethnographical science. The most perfect and most beautiful type of the human species is found in that centre of the temperate zone, in Iran, Armenia, and the Caucasus; whilst some naturalists have awarded the palm of superiority to the Arabs on the east side of the Red Sea. Man is here, both physically and intellectually, in the highest perfection of his nature. The Caucasian race includes the Greeks and the Hebrews; the nation of beauty and the nation of truth, of art and of religion; it has thus become the delight and the guide of the human families; it has ennobled and elevated mankind. Now it is a very important and remarkable fact, that the further we depart from that centre, the type of man loses both in physical and internal perfection; and it loses in proportion to the distance. The further we proceed—either to the south, to Africa; or eastward, to Australia; to the west, to America; or, northward, to the poles—we find a gradual degeneracy of the human form and the human mind; till the Hottentots and the Bushmen, the South Australians and the natives of Van Diemen's Land, the South American Indians and the Pesherais, the Laplanders and the Esquimaux, either cause disgust by their deformity, or pity by their wretchedness, or aversion by their sensual and brutish propensities. This remarkable law assists us, not only to discover the original seat of mankind, but it is another very weighty proof of the unity of all

human races; it is another link in the chain of brotherhood which encircles the children of men.

3. The Scriptures further contend, that all nations of the earth descend from *one* primitive pair. This is a principle of the highest moral and practical moment in the system of Biblical theology; it is one of the corner-stones of the whole edifice; for it establishes the UNITY OF THE HUMAN FAMILIES; it teaches that the aim and end of mankind, which is universal brotherhood in the love of God, is no new, no unattainable principle; that it is only a return to the primordial idea of the Creator, and to the original state of the newly-formed earth. It is as important and vital as the two other unities which the Bible proclaims, the unity of *God*, and the unity of the *world* with all its starry hosts; it is the fountain and source of all duties which man owes to man, and nation to nation; it fills us with a proper moral horror against the idea that there are some classes born for slavery, whilst others are destined to govern — a notion by which even the most civilized nations of antiquity disgraced their philosophy; it is, in a word, the only guarantee, as it is the root, of those admirable social laws and precepts which constitute a chief part of the Scriptures. Now the ethnographic inquiries have established the fact, that if the human race does not descend from ONE pair, it certainly belongs to ONE SPECIES. The former supposition has been doubted by many intelligent and competent scholars; and a plurality of first parents, brought forth in the different centres of creation, seems to be more and more extensively adopted. But the latter hypothesis is now raised beyond the sphere of uncertainty; it has almost the weight of unimpeachable truth. It has been sanctioned by the nearly unanimous opinions of the greatest natural philosophers of this and the preceding century.

There are, indeed, black and white races; and it appears to be a law, that the less perfect the type the deeper the colour. But it is now generally acknowledged, that colour is no fundamental characteristic. Those inhabitants of Hindostan, who are of one descent, contain groups of people of almost all shades of colour; some Negro nations of Africa, as the Jolofs and Kafirs, possess features and limbs not inferior in elegance to those of Europeans; Arab and Jewish families, settled in Northern Africa became black like the natives; Negro infants acquire their deep black colour only after exposure for some time to the atmosphere; the face and hands are always of deeper hue than the parts of the body protected by clothing; true whites are sometimes born among the Negroes; and an Arab couple, living in the valley of the Jordan, became the parents of perfectly black children. The skin and the hair are, in their physiological nature, very analogous formations; for the hairs are but skin tubularly prolonged; and yet we find all possible varieties of the colour of the hair among the same tribe, and often in the same family. Although there are races with a facial line nearly vertical, and others with the same line greatly inclined, there are individuals who display every possible degree between these differences; it is, therefore, impossible to draw the line of separation, if they are not all from a common origin. The influence of climate, the mode of living, ease or hardship, the quality of food, of dwellings and clothing, cleanliness, civilisation, the operation of the mind, and general habits, are sufficient to explain the differences in the various tribes, from the Caucasians down to the Negroes; even with regard to the anatomical structure, which, in general, refers only to some not fundamental modifications of form. Nor does the variety of languages contradict the unity of the human race; though all tongues have been classified in groups or families, they seem reducible to one primitive idiom; every progress in the comparative study of languages brings to light new analogies in the structure and in the grammatical forms, and affinities of the roots and terms; even the languages of the new continents do not seem to be excepted from this general resemblance. The human race might, in consequence of its wide diffusion, exhibit similar modifications to those, which single species of animals, if dispersed and domesticated, show with regard to

their colour, integument, structure of limbs, proportional size of parts, their general animal economy, and the instincts, habits, and powers. But we cannot refrain from quoting the observations of a man, who has surveyed the vast field of the natural sciences at once with the minuteness of an analyst and the comprehensiveness of a philosopher, and who has, with singular learning and industry, summed up almost the whole enormous range of this branch of literature. Alexander von Humboldt remarks: "Whilst attention was exclusively directed to 'the extremes' of colour and form, the result of the first vivid impressions derived from the senses was a tendency to view these differences as characteristics, not of mere *varieties*, but of originally distinct *species*. The permanence of certain types, in the midst of the most opposite influences, especially of climate, appeared to favour this view, notwithstanding the shortness of the time to which the historical evidence applied. But, in my opinion, more powerful reasons lend their weight to the other side of the question, and corroborate the *unity of the human race*. I refer to the many intermediate gradations of the tint of the skin and the form of the skull, which have been made known to us by the rapid progress of geographical science in modern times; to the analogies derived from the history of varieties, both domesticated and wild; and to the positive observations collected respecting the limits of fecundity in hybrids. The greater part of the supposed contrasts, to which so much weight was formerly assigned, have disappeared before the laborious investigations of Tiedemann on the brain of Negroes and of Europeans, and the anatomical researches of Vrolik and Weber." If we add to these external analogies the inward resemblance of all tribes of man; if we consider, that almost all, from the civilised European to the savage inhabitant of Madagascar and the South Sea Islands, are conscious of a supreme government, and are capable of understanding the bliss of virtue and the torment of crime; that all feel the necessity of penetrating through the vestibule of time to the realms of eternity, and there to seek reward for the good and punishment for the wicked — that all try to express, by the medium of language, the cravings of their hearts, and the thoughts of their mind; if, in a word, we consider, that all which is essential and characteristic in man, in his superiority over the brute creation, is equally found, though in different degrees of development, among the various nations most distant in local habitation, and most differing in external appearance: — we shall cease to doubt that all men form *one* species, and that all are descended, at least, from a kindred ancestry; we shall willingly admit, that it is impossible to divide the human families in distinct *races* with clearly definable criteria;[1] and we shall allow our minds more unrestrictedly to indulge in the beatifying promise of a time, when all the nations of the earth will form one fraternal community, linked together by the same religion and by that exalted humanity which is the unfailing result of an enlightened knowledge of God. If, therefore, the arguments in favour of a plurality of first ancestors should even be considerably increased, and raise this opinion to a perfect certainty, the beautiful doctrine of the Bible would not be endangered or overthrown; the idea of an indestructible unity of mankind would remain; all would yet be the children of *one* eternal Father, and all would possess the same general qualities. From the physical unity we should rise to the higher internal relationship; and if all are not the bodily descendants of Adam, all bear alike the spiritual image of the Creator.

But it is our duty to advert to another opinion regarding the origin of man. Were we to weigh it by the intrinsic force of its arguments, it would scarcely deserve a serious notice; but it is, unfortunately, making so rapid progress, that it is impossible to overlook it; and the spirit of our age is peculiarly favourable to its pernicious propagation.

[1] The classification of Blumenbach in five races, of Pritchard in seven, having, like all the others, been found unsatisfactory.

It is a very old physical doctrine, that all organic beings, both plants and animals, were produced directly by the earth itself, in virtue of its innate properties; this was called the "free creative power of matter"; for the earth was believed to enclose, from the beginning, the hidden seeds of all organic life. Now it is asserted, that, in precisely the same manner, men were created in all parts of the globe, wherever the earth was sufficiently advanced in its component parts to furnish the materials for the human organism; and wherever the earth was *capable* of producing men, it was *necessitated* to do so. If the naturalists had stopped at this point, it would have been difficult to refute them conclusively; for they appeal to facts which lie entirely beyond human experience and human speculation. But they did not think fit to stop there. They asserted, that there is no difference between chemical processes and organic life; that it is, therefore, not impossible to bring forth organic beings by chemical forces; and they exultingly pointed to an insect of a not very inferior order, called Acarus Crossii, which was ostensibly produced in that way. This instance was proclaimed as a clear illustration of the origin of man, who, it was contended, was formed at a time when the earth's surface still possessed the elements for the spontaneous working of similar chemical processes. But even this theory was not deemed sufficient; it was but the starting-point for other more adventurous and more audacious conjectures, the detestable consequences of which strike at the very root of human existence. It was asserted, that all organic beings, with their various classes, orders, and types, are literally the lineal descendants of each other; that the first step in the creation of life upon our planet was a chemico-electric operation, by which simple germinal vesicles were produced; that then the lower organization always produced the next higher form, in the same manner as the butterfly emerges from the larva, or the beetle from the wornils, or the frog from the fish-like tadpole; till at last man was born in due and regular succession; that, for instance, the fishes are the ancestors of the reptiles; which, in their turn, are the progenitors of the birds; and so on, till the Labyrinthodon or Cheirotherium, that massive Batrachian, which left its hand-like footprints in the New Red Sandstone, became the parent of man! This is the glorious origin of our race! this is the noble ancestry of which man has to boast! His pedigree ascends to the beetle and the shell-fish; his relationship comprises all the fishes of the sea, and all the beasts of the forest! A Batrachian (or, according to older naturalists, a monkey) is the father of man, of whom the greatest bard exclaimed, in enraptured admiration: "How noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form and moving, how express and admirable! in action, how like an angel! in apprehension, how like a God!"[1] And those philosophers even hold out the hope that man will, in the course of time, become the parent of a higher order of beings, whenever it happens that the fœtus is retained and developed in the mother's womb beyond the present period of its secret genesis; just as, by a mere modification of the embryonic progress, which it is in the power of the adult animals to effect, a working-bee or a queen may be produced; or as *oats*, if sown at the usual time, kept cropped down during summer and autumn, and allowed to remain over winter, are said to become *rye* at the close of the ensuing summer.

According to some champions of this theory, Hindostan was the first seat of the human race; and the reason which they assign will no longer surprise us: "because we must expect man to have originated where the highest species of monkeys (quadrumana) are to be found, which is unquestionably in the Indian archipelago"! And they teach that, as the monkeys are the parents of the Negroes, or the lowest type of men, so the Negroes became, by the principle of development, the ancestors of the next higher, or the Malayan, race; till, in the same gradation, the highest, or Cau-

[1] Hamlet, ii. 2

casian, tribes were produced: so that mankind itself has passed through stages similar to those which mark the progress of the various orders of animals! And lest we omit any important point in this sublime theory, we add, that this is but a very small portion of the metamorphoses which we have undergone. The organisation of man, it is said, gradually passes through conditions of, generally speaking, a fish, a reptile, a bird, and the lower mammalia, before it attains its specific maturity; and at one of the last stages of his fœtal career, he exhibits one characteristic of the perfect ape; that, especially, his brain resembles successively that of an adult fish, a reptile, of birds, of the mammalia, after which it is at last developed into the brain of man. For it is asserted as a general principle, that each animal passes, in the course of its germinal history, through a series of changes resembling the *permanent forms*, first of the various orders inferior to it in the entire scale, and then of its own order.

But all facts rise with a thousand-fold voice against that theory; the relationship between the present and the extinct creatures can in no instance be proved; there are no genealogies of development; there is no direct lineage, nothing like parental descent.

It cannot be surprising, that such premises led to the most monstrous conclusions; that a school has been formed which not only renewed the system of the heathen Epicureans, but carried it out in its most revolting consequences; that it is most clamorously asserted, that the world was formed through itself by atoms, or "monads," working upon each other by the aid of chance; that man is a developed animal; his thoughts are the product of oxidised coal and phosphorescent fat; his will depends on the swelling of the fibres, and the contact of the different substances of the brain; and his sentiments are the movements of the electric currents in the nerves; that the notions of God, soul, virtue, conscience, immortality, and the like, are illusory products of the changes of matter in the brain; crime and murder are the consequence of a deception, and of the dislocation of a brain-fibre. Therefore, the greatest regard for criminals is demanded; for those of them who are not victims of erroneous social conditions, are the prey of some unfortunate tendencies which they have inherited from nature; so that malefactors must be sent to hospitals and asylums, and not to prisons and workhouses; the judge is to be entirely superseded by the physician; theft, and calumny, and fraud, do not come before the tribunal of morality, but are to be cured by physic and medicines; and even murder is no atrocious crime, but an unhappy mistake, which it would be absurd and cruel to visit with punishment. In such perversion of notions we must tremble for the safety of society. The very essence and nature of man are denied; and his consciousness itself is declared a phantom and a dream! The happiness of man and the order of the universe are crushed in one vast and fearful ruin. Every sympathetic feeling is a weakness, and all enthusiasm is infatuation; hope and faith are the offspring of credulous indolence; and soon, alas! love will follow into the same awful abyss![2]

And what is Providence? or how does it work? "The individual is to the Author of nature a consideration of inferior moment. Everywhere we see the arrangements for the species perfect; the individual is left, as it were, to take his chance amidst the *melée* of the various laws affecting him. If he be found inferiorly endowed, or ill befalls him, there was, at least, no partiality against him. The system has the fairness of a lottery, in which every one has the like chance of drawing the prize." This is the dreary and awful result of that materialistic philosophy which, in order to secure the glory of the race, abandons the individuals to despair and to chance, and hurls all into a ghastly precipice of misery and wretchedness, even the scanty number of those not

[2] See the works of Carl Vogt, Burmeister, Moleschott, Gruson, Czolbe, Buechner, Lamarck, Maillet, and "Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation," pp. 146—278, 297, 380.

excepted, who, by their superior organisation, are favoured "to draw the prize." What consolations has that wisdom to offer to the "blanks," who so urgently need them? What will support and encourage them to bear the endless toils of existence, to maintain the serenity of the mind, and, in spite of temptations and hardships, to persevere in the path of virtue? It is not sufficient for man that God is the *Creator;* he requires also a *Providence;* he demands the free interposition of a moral agency; he will be certain, not only of the grandeur of God, but of His love; he draws courage and hope only from the conviction that an all-seeing eye explores the heart, regards virtue, and inflicts deserved castigation on vice; he can strive after perfection only when he knows that there is greater happiness in *wisdom* than in worldly *prudence;* and that external *success* is not the true test of human worth. Let no philosopher, in the conceit of an artificial fortitude, call this weakness; even he will frequently shudder at the chilling greatness of his doctrines; even he will often be overwhelmed by unspeakable wretchedness, from which not his death-spreading theory, but the returning conviction of an immutable moral order, can alone relieve him.— Nature is certainly a work of art, but the Artist is greater than His work; it is but a part of the emanation of His mind. The world is founded on eternal laws; but within the universal necessity ample scope is preserved to the liberty of man. It is, indeed, added by some, that there is a system of mercy and grace behind the screen of nature, which is to make up for all casualties endured here; but the more determined votaries of that school have ridiculed the idea of an after-life; and they could not consistently but reject it; for, on the one hand, their notions regarding the close connection between man and the brute creation would oblige them to accord immortality to the animals also; and, on the other hand, their conviction that a soul cannot exist without being associated with matter, excludes the idea of life after the dissolution of the body.

In that theory is nothing but death, corruption, and annihilation; but as long as one human mind feels an aspiration beyond the dust on which the foot treads, that theory is a falsehood and a lie, even if it should have every microscope and the whole chemical apparatus in its favour; the conviction which comes from within; which has lived in the human race for millenniums as an imperishable property; which has from a faint dawn risen to greater and greater brilliancy; which has given birth to all religions and to all philosophies; which is the invisible anchor to which every uncorrupted soul instinctively clings — this internal conviction is a thousand and a million times more irresistible than all analysis and all demonstration: for the spirit cannot be analysed, and the superhuman truths mock human demonstration. It is true that every function is tied to an organ, without which the function is impossible; but the individual parts are animated by an invisible bond, by a power which converts the mechanism into an organism; and a free manifestation of the will, independent of the parts, and emanating from that organic life, is required to move and to direct the organs of reflection and of feeling, and to cause the *functions* of the nervous system. And, as it is impossible to deny the *function* of the intellect, as every one must confess that man displays a mental life, he necessarily has a corresponding *organ* — he has a *mind* and a *soul.* But the converse of that axiom, viz., that every organ must always and unavoidably exercise a function, is erroneous; it is false in point of fact, and would theoretically turn man into a piece of machinery, which, once put in motion, must always and perpetually continue the same movements. Thus the wild strife about the relation between "power and matter," which, like a furious war-cry, sounds through the camps of science, is at once silenced. Honour, and duty, and faith, and love, have moved millions to defy death and torture; to these millions, certainly, the Divine was an all-powerful, a sacred reality; and, indeed, they are the true representatives of the human family. The study of nature cannot destroy, but must enhance and fortify, the idea of the godly attributes of man; it cannot lead to the idolatrous deification of

the physical powers; the Mind which called this matter into existence, and which rules and directs behind the matter, must not only speak to the intellect, but to the heart and to the soul of man; the physical is but the basis for the metaphysical, the natural is but the starting-point for the supernatural. Even in the most perverse tendencies of the sciences, the nobility of the human mind still manifests itself; and even through the most fearful aberrations of faith, a ray of divine grandeur still gleams. A higher yearning might cease in many individuals, it will live in the nation; it might become extinct in one nation, it will flourish in another; on the ruins of Greek literature rose that of Rome; the decaying Roman empire was re-animated by the influence of the Biblical truths and the vitality of the Teutonic race; and the darkness of succeeding barbarous ages was dispersed by the dawn of a brighter civilisation: truth and idealism, if driven from pole to pole, will never fail to find a refuge in mankind. Wherever they lose their power the social ties are severed, the national prosperity declines, and the political structure totters. One religious system may be overthrown by another, but religion is indestructible; one philosophical theory may be refuted by a later reasoner, but philosophy is an inherent part in human nature; and even poetry, that aërial daughter of fancy, frail and unsubstantial as it may appear, will last beyond the eternal rocks and the unfathomable oceans—it will survive all the capricious fluctuations of taste and fashion, and with the last man will be buried the last lover of poetry and art.

VII.—CONCLUSIONS AND INFERENCES.

We have seen that the results of the natural sciences are at variance with the Biblical narrative, especially with regard to the Age of the World, the Creation in Six Days, and the Formation of the Solar System and the Universe.

In the exposition of that Book, the mission of which is the diffusion of *truth* on earth, candour and unreserved truthfulness are primary duties. Truth can never be aided by falsehood, nor does it require its questionable assistance; zeal preserves, but blind zeal destroys. Firmness is one thing, and obstinacy another; the one may be coupled with the calmest prudence, the other wilfully shuts the ears to arguments and to experience; the one yields when it is convinced, the other is determined to be never convinced; the one proceeds from strength of mind, the other from weakness of intellect. We deem it as impossible as it would be degrading, to conceal or to gloss over the difficulties to which we have alluded. The Book of Nature is no longer a sealed secret; it is no longer the exclusive privilege of the initiated; it has become the common property of nations; every man who has passed beyond the first elements of education hastens to study the Creator in His works, there to adore His wisdom, to prostrate himself before His grandeur; in fact, the time is approaching when the study of Nature will belong to the very elements of education. Are the expositors of Scripture prepared to stem this torrent? Will they oppose this universal movement towards the knowledge of the physical sciences? Will they once more proclaim open war against academies and observatories? Will they brand with the odious names of heretic, infidel, and atheist, those whom God has graciously gifted with the subtle intellect to penetrate into the abstrusest laws of nature, to search the depths of the ocean and the earth, and to watch the marvellous orbits of unnumbered stars? "Shall man curse where God has blessed?" Fatal error! demented fanaticism!

The natural sciences have a right to ascend to the first causes of creation. This is no arrogance, no ungodly assumption on their part. It is no rebellion of the human intellect to exert itself in comprehending the wonders of the Deity; it would, on the contrary, be despotism and short-sighted tyranny on the part of the theological sciences, if they dictated to physical researches arbitrary limits—if they permitted to the latter the analysis of that which exists, but decried the enquiry into its origin and its

probable future development. If the human mind can, in the world of *thought*, penetrate through endless regions of time and space, why should it, in the *material* world, be fettered to actual appearances? Why should it not, in the realm of the sciences, also be able to ascend from effects to causes, or to descend from means to ends? It is, on the other hand, no derogation to the natural sciences that they have often been convicted of fallacies and erroneous conclusions; or that one hypothesis is frequently opposed by another perfectly contrary theory.

We are here reminded of the beautiful words of Socrates, who, in Plato's Phaedon, when new and apparently unanswerable objections were raised against his proofs of the immortality of the soul, said: "First of all, we must beware, lest we meet with that great mischance to become haters of reasoning as some become haters of men (misanthropes); for no greater evil can happen to any one than to hate reasoning. But hatred of reasoning and hatred of mankind both spring from the same source. For the latter is produced in us, from having placed too great reliance on some one without sufficient knowledge of him, and from having considered him to be a man altogether true, sincere, and faithful; and then, after a little while, finding him depraved and unfaithful, and after him another; and when a man has often experienced this, he at last hates all men, and thinks that there is no excellence at all in mankind. And yet he attempts to deal with men without sufficient knowledge of human nature, since he is unable to discern between the good and the bad. Just so a man who has discovered the fallacy of one argument after another, after having some time relied on their soundness, at last distrusts all argument, and becomes a hater of reasoning though he ought to accuse his own shortsightedness, or unskilfulness." It seems to be the task and mission of the intellect to advance by labour and exertion, and often to arrive at truth only by the long and wearisome circuits of error. But though the natural sciences may have occasion to retract many of the theories at present prevailing, they have succeeded in establishing so many fundamental truths, that their organic development towards the highest aim is for ever secured; and as we have, in the preceding remarks, based our arguments on those incontroverted facts only, we consider the results which we have derived from them, on the whole, beyond dispute, although we shall always be willing to modify some of the details whenever their inaccuracy may be demonstrated. We, for our own part, have the unshaken, deeply-rooted conviction, that every earnest exertion of the human mind necessarily leads to an increased and purer fear of God; and even if the abundance of light which science suddenly pours forth, should at first dazzle the eye — even if reason, surprised and amazed at its own power and glory, should for a time walk its own path, apparently independent and free from the control of the Universal Mind, the excess of light will gradually subside into a serene brightness, and reason will, in more perfect harmony, ally itself to Him, of whom it is a part. Only let the research be calm and unprejudiced, humble and modest—only let "the axe not boast itself against Him who works with it."

The Pentateuch has a three-fold end; it is intended to show, first, God as the Creator and Ruler of the World; secondly, to define the position of Israel among the nations of the earth; and, thirdly, to explain the organization of the Hebrews as a theocratical monarchy after their conquest of Palestine. Such is the aim; such are the leading ideas of the Books of Moses. These principles they unfold and carry out with minute consistency, whilst all other portions are only introduced to throw light upon them. They constitute the essence of the Mosaic dispensation; they are its exclusive characteristics, which are found in no other work which man possesses. The Scriptures proclaimed those *spiritual* and *moral* truths, which will be acknowledged in all ages; and they proclaimed them at a time when the whole earth was shrouded in mental darkness. But it is quite different with the *scientific* truths. The

people of Israel, although favoured as the medium of higher religious enlightenment, remained, *in all respects*, a common member in the family of nations, subject to the same laws of progress, left to the same exertions, adhering to their former notions and habits of thought, rectified by their faith only in so far as to harmonise with the pure doctrine of monotheism and the absolute rule of a just Providence. Hence, for instance, Moses did not abolish the "avenge of blood," although he materially modified it; nor did he command monogamy, although he evidently encouraged it; he retained the phylacteries, which he, however, divested of all superstitious elements; and he ordained, in common with almost all heathen legislators, the sanctification of all first-born of men and animals, and all first-fruits, although he made this law subservient to the purposes of his theocracy. But the law is inexorable in punishing witchcraft, necromancy, divination, enchantment, or any other appeal to the power of spirits, because this would have endangered the principal idea of the legislation; it would have defiled the purity of monotheism.

The Bible was *not even intended* to supersede science, but only to control it; faith should not awe reason, but guide it, and protect its daring flight from degrading aberrations. The Israelites were to enter the lists with all other nations in every worldly progress, in sciences and discoveries; they were to exert their intellects; they were "to study day and night": far from imagining that they had, by an act of grace and without their co-operation, received all the treasures of thought from God, they were to strive and "to dig for wisdom and knowledge more than for riches." If the minds were to be shielded against stagnation, new channels of mental activity were to be opened to them after they had been set at rest about the great and mysterious problems of the creating and ruling power of the Universe. Therefore we constantly find, both in the Old and the New Testament, in worldly and scientific matters, a very close analogy to the ideas of the respective times and nations; the Biblical writers adopt, in these respects, not only the ordinary phraseology, but they can express but the general notions, of those whose *religious* conduct they intended to regulate or to correct. The Hebrews had, indeed, no predilection for *positive* sciences; they were of a reflective, intuitive nature; they delighted in religious speculation; external observation and scientific combination were not in their mental disposition. At no period, therefore, did the natural sciences flourish among them; and though they excelled all nations in sublimity of thought, they were inferior to all in practical studies; their life was too much directed to the higher aims of truth, to leave much leisure for curiosity or expediency; and if they obtained some scanty scientific results, they soon forced them under the dominion of religion, and made them assume an unsecular character. The account of the Creation is not introduced in order to afford information on physical problems, but to form a basis for the institution of the Sabbath; and as the Sabbath is a chief foundation for the whole Law, so the Creation is the basis of the whole system of Biblical history. This constitutes one of the most essential differences between the Hebrew and other cosmogonies. The Scriptures have, from their beginning, a fixed spiritual end; the narrative has an ideal tendency; it is not inserted for its own sake, but to prove a great truth, and to support a sublime precept; it is represented as historical, but it has a philosophical back-ground; its interpretation must be literal, but it yet borrows some celestial light from the great source of eternal truth.

If the Scriptures imply, that they contain the complete system of theology necessary to the soul of man, they never intimate, that they embrace all the sciences accessible to his mind; they leave to the latter an infinite extent and surface beyond their pages; they allow to the intellect endless scope for labour, and research, and progress, — but they have, in some measure, reserved to themselves the test of truth and error, and have assigned to the human understanding the boundary, beyond which it is not permitted to travel.

Now, the results of the physical sciences regarding the Creation have not to fear that test; they have not trespassed that boundary. They do not in the least contradict the three chief principles of the Pentateuch; they have, in fact, only reference to the first of them, to God as Creator and Ruler of the World. But they are so far from weakening this truth, that they have, indeed, become one of its most powerful and most substantial supports. Every inch which the geologist descends into the depth of the earth, proclaims to the astonished eye the secret working of an omnipotent Creator; every star which the magic power of the telescope reveals to the astronomer in the realms of space, preaches with overwhelming eloquence the unspeakable glory of an all-wise Governor. Does it derogate from the grandeur of the Eternal, if He has watched over the progress of our planet for millions of years instead of a few millenniums? or, if our earth is only as a sand-corn among the numberless worlds which His power has created ? The oldest and the youngest of the natural sciences, astronomy and geology, so far from being dangerous to the notion of a Universal Mind, are peculiarly calculated to lead back the wandering intellect to religious emotions; they spontaneously assume the dignity of sacred sciences; the student rises from them hallowed and elevated; they seem, indeed, providentially destined to engage the present century so powerfully, that the ideal majesty of infinite time and endless space might counteract that low and narrow materialism which threatens to bury all the sublimest aspirations of our divine nature in the common gulph of selfishness and worldliness, and which prompts man, "the feeble tenant of an hour," to regard himself, in the pride of his property or the vanity of his knowledge, as the master of creation; though—

> "Man's noisy years seem moments in the being
> Of the eternal silence."[1]

And it is the duty of Biblical interpretation, with a vigilant and prospective eye, "Heart within, and God o'erhead," to watch over those precious boons, and, for their defence, to borrow weapons from every accessible store-house.

We have thus shown, by positive argument, that a conciliation between the Bible and the natural sciences is impossible: but, in order to give another proof that we are perfectly impartial, that we have no other end but the truth; and that we have considered this important subjectin all its bearings, we deem it necessary to conclude with a review of the chief attempts which have been made to effect that harmony, and to show that all these efforts have signally failed. This negative part will complete our task, and will, we trust, remove every uncertainty which might still linger in the reader's mind, and might cause him to hesitate as to his final judgment. For we shall prove, that some of those attempts are specious, others futile, but all utterly untenable.

VIII.—REVIEW OF CONCILIATIONS HITHERTO ATTEMPTED.

We may be permitted to pass over the strangely sceptical, but perfectly ungrounded, opinions, that our present knowledge of the Hebrew language is insufficient for an accurate understanding of the Biblical narrative;[2] or that the Hebrew text is grossly corrupted by several erroneous and absurd glosses, which by mistake have, in the course of transcription, been inserted in the Biblical narrative by ancient copyists.[3] These opinions evade the question rather than solve it; and we proceed to mention the following more positive interpretations:—

1. The world was really and literally created in six days. This opinion is, we believe, sufficiently refuted by the preceding remarks;[4] it is made absolutely impossible by the indisputable results of all the combined natural sciences. The attempt to raise that opinion to a dogma would totally estrange all reflective minds and the men of

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[1] Wordsworth.
[2] Thus, for instance, Babbage.
[3] Granville Penn and others.
[4] pp. 6—13.

science from the Biblical records; it would compel them to a decision by no means favourable to the authority of the Scriptures; and would for ever destroy that *moral* influence which they are so eminently calculated to exercise. It is, therefore, unnecessary to urge minor difficulties; for instance, how vegetation could thrive before the existence of the sun;[5] how we can reconcile the established fact, that both plants, and fishes, and other animals are, in consequence of their peculiar structure and entire anatomy, confined within precise geographical boundaries, beyond which they cannot live, with the statement that all trees and all animals were combined in Paradise;[6] and how these beings could afterwards find their way to the different, and often very distant, zones and climes adapted to their various organisms. These and many other difficulties, to which we have already alluded, prove undeniably that the literal acceptation of the text is incompatible with the fundamental results of the natural sciences.

2. In order to gain scope for the geological epochs, many critics have proposed to interpret the term "day" as a *period*, or an *indefinite epoch*. But this is equally inadmissible. In our plain, purely historical, and calm narrative, this metaphorical use of the word is rendered impossible by the repeated phrase—"And evening was, and morning was," both forming one natural day. Nor can the circumstance, that on the fourth day only the sun was created to divide the day from the night,[7] prove that the word "day" denotes, in the preceding verses at least, an unlimited time; if it means *day* in one verse, it has the same signification throughout the whole narrative, or we should be obliged to take the day of Sabbath[8] likewise as "a period of rest." This has, indeed, sometimes been done, even in recent works. It is maintained that the work of Redemption is the work of God's Sabbath-day, and that the Sabbath of man is a miniature imitation of this seventh period, just as a map may be a faithful, though small copy of the countries represented. But if the "rest" of God is intended as the type of the human Sabbath, it must in every way be adapted to man's capability and condition; it is a mere fiction, to say, that "the work of Redemption" is, in the Old Testament, represented as "the work of God's Sabbath"; and what, we ask, will become of Biblical interpretation, if such rules are unhesitatingly applied, which, in the exposition of any other book, would be denounced as preposterous, or dismissed with a smile—if the word "day" is interpreted to mean four-and-twenty hours, and in the very same verse is made to signify a hundred thousand years? The poetical sentence, "A thousand years are, in the eyes of God, as one day,"[9] describes simply the eternity of God, which knows no time and has no limit; and its metaphorical character is unmistakeably expressed in the parallel passage—"One day is with the Lord as a thousand years."[10] We speak, indeed, of the "morning" or "evening" of life, but such figurative expressions prove as little for the ordinary usage of the word "day," as those Biblical metaphors, "the day of perdition,"[11] "of darkness,"[12] or "of distress;"[13] the "day of revenge,"[14] or "of Divine wrath;"[15] the "day of war,"[16] "of help and rescue;"[17] or the frequent phrase, "in that day."[18] All these terms occur only in poetical or prophetic portions, where a misconception is entirely impossible. The "day of the departure from Egypt,"[19] or "the day of Egypt,"[20] means strictly the day of the exodus itself, which was the time of Israel's greatest glory, or the time when God

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[5] vers. 11, 12, 16.
[6] ii. 9, 19, 0.
[7] ver. 14.
[8] ii. 2, 3.
[9] Ps. xc. 4.
[10] 2 Pet. iii. 8.
[11] Deut. xxxii. 35; Jer. xlvi. 21; comp. Ps. cxxxvii. 7.
[12] Job xv. 23; Ps. xxvii. 5.
[13] Gen. xxxv. 3; Ps. xx. 3.
[14] Isa. xxxiv. 8, lxiii. 4; Jer. xvii. 18; Joel i. 15, ii. 1.
[15] Lament. ii. 1, 21, 22; Zeph. i. 18, ii. 3.
[16] Hos. x. 14; Amos i. 14; Zech. xiv. 3; Job xxxviii. 23.
[17] Isa. xlix. 8.
[18] Isa. xxiii. 15; xxvii. 12, 13; Jer. iv. 9, etc.
[19] Deut. xvi. 3. Comp. Exod. xii. 51, xiii. 4; Jer. vii. 2.2.
[20] Ezek. xxx. 9

smote all the firstborn of the Egyptians.[1] In a similar manner, a great number of analogous passages, where the word *day* occurs, are to be explained.[2] The first creative act of God was the production of matter; a word, a thought sufficed; it was the introductory work of the first day; and the command that light should appear was pronounced in a subsequent part of the same day. As the end of the creation was order, life, and beauty, the production of the chaos did not occupy a day for itself, but formed the starting-point from which the cosmogony at once passed to the origin of universal light. Whatever efforts have been made to prove that the days here represent periods, the advocates of this opinion have not been able to bring forward one single plausible argument; unless it be considered in harmony with the *Biblical notions* of Divine omnipotence, that God created the light, or the heaven, or the dry land, in a period of 50,000 or 100,000 years; of that Omnipotence which "commands, and it exists." The term "evening and morning" describes indisputably the lapse of one complete day, or of four-and-twenty hours and this cycle of hours elapses, even if there were no sun to mark it. Sun and moon do not *make* the day; they only *govern* it.[3] And as there were days and nights before the creation of the sun and the moon, so there will be, at the end of time, light without the luminaries which diffuse it; as is distinctly stated, both in the Old and the New Testament.

3. Hugh Miller once believed that the "six days" were ordinary days of twenty-four hours each, and that the latest of the geologic ages was separated by a great chaotic gap from our own. But at that time his labours as a practical geologist had been restricted to the palaeozoic and Secondary Rocks; later, however, he directed his attention to the more recent formations also, and studied their peculiar organisms; and his unavoidable conclusions were, that "for many ages ere man was ushered into being, not a few of his humble contemporaries of the fields and woods enjoyed life in their present haunts, and that for thousands of years anterior to even *their* appearance, many of the existing molluscs lived in our seas;" and, consequently, he *since then accepted the six days of creation as vastly extended periods*, perhaps "millenniums of centuries."[5] We have introduced this opinion as a type of many similar views. It is perfectly unworthy of Biblical science, constantly to modify the interpretation according to the successive and varying results of other sciences, just as if the Biblical text were composed of indefinite and vague hieroglyphics, capable of every possible construction; it is a most objectionable practice to make the Hebrew narrative subservient to all the fluctuating movements of heterogeneous studies, which are based upon premises perfectly different from the Biblical notions, and which, as systematic sciences, neither derive support from them, nor require their authority and sanction. Scientific honesty and manly firmness prescribe a far different conduct, at once more simple and more decided. Let the true and authentic sense of the Biblical narrative be ascertained with all possible assistance of learning and philological knowledge: independently of this, let the other sciences bearing on the subject be zealously studied; and then let the results of both researches be compared, without bias and without anxious timidity. If careful geological studies press upon the mind the conviction, that even the present epoch commenced many ages before the appearance of man on earth; let it be admitted, without unavailing reluctance, that the Mosaic record speaks of a creation in six days, which is irreconcilable with those investigations, since it is philologically impossible to understand the word "day" in this section in any other sense but a period of twenty-four hours. Thus geology preserves its legitimate freedom, and the Bible is liberated from the trammels of an irrational mode of interpretation. That this conflict does not

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[1] Num. iii. 13, viii. 17.
[2] 1 Sam. xv. 35, xxvii. 1; Ps. lxxviii. 42; Isa. xiii. 6, 9, etc.
[3] i. 16.
[4] Isa. lx. 19; Revel. xxi. 23.
[5] See Testimony of the Rocks, x. xi. 121, 122.

affect the moral and religious teaching of the Scriptures, has already been urged and explained.

4. But the device that the days denote epochs, is not only arbitrary, but ineffective; for the six "epochs" of the Mosaic creation correspond in no manner with the gradual formation of the cosmos. More than one attempt has, however, been made to show this agreement; but they crumble into nothing at the slightest touch. Geologists and astronomers have divided the six days between themselves, and both of them have limited themselves to those three days, which, they thought, alone fell within their province. The same distinguished geologist to whom we have already alluded, found himself called upon only to account for the third, fifth, and sixth day of the creative week. They correspond, in his opinion, with the three great divisions of the geological strata, in such manner that the oldest, or palaeozoic division, is identical with the third day, or the period of *plants;* the middle, or Secondary series, with the fifth day, or the epoch of *the great sea monsters and whale-like reptiles;* and the later, or Tertiary fossiliferous beds, with the sixth day, or the age of *the beasts of the field and of man.*[6] This view might, at first glance, appear inviting; it captivates by an apparently remarkable coincidence. But the resemblance is deceptive; it is limited to the mere outlines and general characteristics, and ceases entirely in the more detailed application. The objections which a more careful consideration brings to light are insurmountable. That view is based upon the erroneous assumption, that the "days" of creation are periods of vast duration; it violently dismembers the *six* days into two unconnected periods; whereas the astronomical and geological days belong inseparably together, since the earth is an integral part of the astral systems; and it confounds the *predominant* or *prominent* organic creatures with the origin of the other, though perhaps less numerous, species; for there existed shells, fishes, and reptiles *long before* the period of the plants which we find compressed in the Carboniferous beds; and yet, according to the Biblical record, the fishes and reptiles were created on the fifth and sixth, the plants on the third, day. This circumstance is fatal to the view in question, which, indeed, stands in a decided conflict with the spirit of our narrative: for the Bible lays the principal stress, not upon "the amazing development of the plants during the protracted *æons* of the Carboniferous period," but upon the *order* in which the plants, the fishes, and the other animals were successively produced; the first and smallest "creeping thing that creeps upon the earth" was brought forth *later* than those huge and enormous trees, whose gigantic structure fills us with astonishment. This is the doctrine of the Bible, which can never be argued away by any geological theory.

5. But, according to that explanation, it remained to account for the astronomical part of the first chapter. In order to effect this, the same scholar has not only revived, but developed with greater copiousness, a conjecture which we had hoped was at last numbered among the errors of the past. It is asserted, that the sun, moon, and stars may have been created long before, though it was not until the fourth period of creation that they became visible from the earth's surface; since the Bible describes, "not what *was*, but what *seemed* to be, and what optically *appeared.*" For it is further maintained, that the description of the first chapter is the result of *actual optical vision;* that, in the same manner as Moses was shown the pattern of the holy Tabernacle and its vessels,[7] he saw "by vision the pattern of those successive pre-Adamic creatures, animal and vegetable, through which our world was fitted up as a place of human habitation"; it is believed that "the drama of creation has been *optically* described, because it was in reality *visionally* revealed"; and that this was done because the communication of the correct scientific theory of Galileo and Newton would have been

[6] See *Hugh Miller*, Testimony of the Rocks, 135—152, 159—169; see, also *McCausland*, Sermons in Stones, pp. 92—200.

[7] Compare Exod. xxiv. 9, 40; xxvi. 30; xxvii. 18.

disbelieved or rejected, as contradictory to the evidence of the senses.—What a complicated tissue of conjectures and assumptions! It is, indeed, very difficult to conceive by what miracle Moses could have enjoyed that extraordinary privilege which this theory claims for him; it is beyond the capability of man to inquire how Moses could actually, standing on some elevation above our planet, have seen, "in a great air-drawn panorama," the creation of light, of the firmament, of the sun and the stars, of the earth itself, with its successive strata and its numberless tenants; and in what manner he knew how many thousand years each "tableau" comprised: such ideas lie so entirely beyond the intellect and experience of man, and *are so utterly destitute of every, the faintest and remotest, Biblical foundation*, that we should reproach ourselves with levity if we attempted to enter fully into these subjects. Those who think this remark too decided, may read the pages in which that imaginary vision is described; they will scarcely believe that they are on the sober ground of science; they will think themselves floating in the aerial spheres of fiction: they see themselves at once introduced into an untroden recess of the Midian desert; here they behold Moses; a great and terrible darkness falls upon the prophet; he sees the Divine spirit moving on the waters; he hears the words: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth"; unreckoned ages pass on; he hears again the creative voice: "Let there be light"; myriads of heavy, sunless days elapse; the dim light sinks beneath the undefined horizon; it again brightens; Moses sees that the lower stratum of the heavens, occupied in the previous vision by seething steam, is clear and transparent, and only in an upper region do the clouds appear. Darkness descends for a third time upon the seer; but again the light rises, and there is no longer an unbroken expanse of sea. "The white surf breaks, at the distant horizon, on an insulated reef, formed, mayhap, by the Silurian or Old Red coral zoophytes ages before, during the bygone yesterday."[1] And in this manner, the author, though with a rare charm of fascinating eloquence, carries out the visions of the six days. Do such soaring flights of fiction demand refutation? They lie beyond the pale both of science and of criticism, in a sphere where reason willingly resigns the sceptre to fancy. And yet it is of this "panorama of creation" that the author contends, with a strange assurance: "I know not a single scientific truth that militates against even the minutest or least prominent of its details": though he admits, in another place, that "the Scriptures have never yet revealed a single scientific truth";[2] and describes those who defend the plain, literal, and exclusively correct acceptation of the text, as men who labour to "pledge revelation to an astronomy as false as that of the Buddhist, Hindu, or Old Teuton."[3] The few arguments which are scantily interspersed in these poetical descriptions, vanish before the slightest examination. The Bible contains notions and miracles far more incomprehensible to the human intellect than the systems of Copernicus, Kepler, and Newton, or the discoveries of geologists; and yet it did not hesitate to proclaim them, because it believed them to be true.—A prophetic vision which reveals *past events* is without example or analogy in the whole range of the Biblical records.—Wherever the Scriptures intend to describe visions, they are careful to introduce them in a manner that they are clearly distinguishable as such, and can never be confounded with plain history. The prophecies of Ezekiel offer so numerous instances of such visions, that it suffices simply to refer to that part of the Old Testament. The concession which has been made, that, in the lapse of time, the prophetic framework of the narrative may have been lost or forgotten, shows the extreme weakness of the whole theory.—How could the plants of the third "period" have grown and prospered, if the sun obtained his power on the earth in the fourth only? And to what extravagant

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[1] *Hugh Miller*, loc. cit., pp. 135—152, 159—169, 187—191.
[2] P. 265. [3] P. 369.

conclusions will, at last, that objectionable mode of interpretation lead? The Biblical records are written in the ordinary style of human composition, for they were intended for the perusal and study of man. This ancient and orthodox principle must remain our supreme rule and guide. Wherever we swerve from it we are hopelessly tossed on the endless waves of unprofitable and often dangerous speculation; we sow the seeds of interminable dissensions; and we contribute to make that book, which was designed to unite mankind, the badge of separation and animosity. By a simple and judicious system of interpretation, in which calm common sense presides, we might hope to see the infinite variety of sects diminished, and to promote the reign of love and concord.

The first chapter of Genesis is, therefore, not a "creative picture," but a creative history; it presents not a series of "prophetic visions or tableaux," but of acts and events; it is neither "mythic poetry," nor "a hieroglyph," nor an "apologue"; but, what it has always struck every plain and unprejudiced reader to be, a simple prose narrative, though sometimes rising to the boundaries of the majestic and the sublime.

6. From very early times, it has been justly supposed. that the first verse of our Book describes the creation of matter, or of the universe in general; whilst the following part of the chapter treats of the arrangement and distribution of matter, of the formation of the earth, and of the beings which people it. This opinion was entertained by many of the early fathers of the church; and has been adopted by many later theologians and critics. Now, most of the modern followers of this opinion, believe that an infinite interval of time elapsed between the creation of matter recorded in the first verse, and the formation of the universe in its present admirable order, a period sufficiently extensive to account for the various and repeated changes, both in the condition of the earth, and the sidereal systems; so that, in fact, the first chapter of Genesis does not fix the antiquity of the globe at all. But this supposition is absolutely untenable, from the following reasons:—1. The second verse, beginning with *and* or *but the earth*, stands evidently in a very close connection with the preceding verse the contents of which it qualifies and defines, describing the state of the earth in its chaotic confusion, and leaving the "heaven" (that is, all the stellar hosts) to a later consideration. The connecting particle *and* expresses here, necessarily, immediate sequence; it is inadmissible to translate: "But *afterwards* the earth *became* waste and desolate"; it is, in a word, utterly impossible to separate the two first verses, and to suppose between them an immense interval of time; this acceptation would not only mock all sound principles of interpretation; but it would, 2ndly, be in direct opposition with Exodus xx. 11: "For *in six days* the Lord made *the heaven and the earth*, the sea and all that is in them." 3. In the New Testament (Matth. xix. 4), man is said to have been created "in the beginning"; the work of the sixth day was, therefore, believed to be coeval with the time specified in the first verse. 4. This theory is of no avail unless it prove the possibility of the vegetable life found within the earth in a fossil state. But the light was only produced in the first, and the sun on the fourth day of the creative week,—and not within that indefinite space which preceded the latest creation;—how can we, therefore, account for the organic remains existing in almost all the secondary and tertiary strata of the earth? The earth could not have been called "dreary and empty" if it teemed with life and vegetation long before its present state, and was, then also, though in an inferior degree, full of harmony, order, and beauty. Immediately before the appearance of man, there was not even one of those transitory chaotic periods which generally accompany the geological revolutions; for many mammiferous animals, as the badger, the goat, and the wild cat, which were the contemporaries of the extinct mammoth, the bulky northern hippopotamus and rhinoceros, or the massive northern elephant and tiger, still live in our forests; and by far the greatest part of the shells of that period still people our waters.

7. Another expedient, equally inefficient, has been attempted, by the assertion, that the Bible never endeavours to teach that which the human mind is by itself able to discover; that it, therefore, in no way intended to give information on the origin of the world, since the natural sciences could, by due exertion, without extraneous aid, furnish the necessary knowledge. But to what consequences does this principle lead? Many parts—nay, by far the greatest portion—of the *moral precepts* of the Bible have been independently discovered and enforced by the *heathen sages* also. Even the Decalogue contains, in its second part at least, commandments which are inherent in the nature of man, and which have been acknowledged as the standard of virtue even by savage tribes. It is not difficult to adduce from the literature of the Greeks and Romans, or the Hindoos and Persians, many, often literal, analogies with very important ethical injunctions. And yet the moral doctrines avowedly constitute the characteristic portion of the Scriptures. Why were they, then, embodied in the Bible, since they have been found in another way also? Or are they to be regarded as accessory and unessential, *because* they have thus been discovered? This nobody has had the courage to assert. But the Bible is *not* silent on the Creation; it attempts, indeed, to furnish its history; but in this account it expresses facts which the researches of science cannot sanction, and which were the common errors of the ancient world. The Bible intended to give a complete system of morality; and, therefore, inserted even those truths which were not new, but were extensively acknowledged by other nations. In the same manner it furnishes a history of creation, such as it was able to give, without regard to the possible future discoveries of the physical sciences.

8. It is maintained, that the lower strata of the earth were formed in the time from the beginning to the deluge, whilst the higher beds of the Tertiary system are the result of the post-diluvian ages. But a host of facts rises to overthrow this opinion. The period from the creation to the deluge comprised, according to Biblical Chronology, not more than 1656 years. This space of time is utterly insufficient to explain the formation of the different lower strata, one or two of which alone required a period incomparably more extended. Since the deluge more than four thousand years have elapsed, and yet within this epoch scarcely more than the alluvial drifts have been formed. The lower strata contain no traces of human bones or human works; the earth was then, indeed, unfit for human habitation; it could not possibly contain a Paradise such as the Scriptures describe, with its luxuriant vegetation and its perfect animal creation. The various beds are the result of violent revolutions of the earth's surface, and yet the Bible makes no mention of them; since even the Noachian deluge caused no material change of our planet; the waters, which covered for a short time its surface, subsided and retired, after which the earth assumed its former state and aspect. We consider it unnecessary here to multiply the reasons against that supposition, as they are partly apparent from our preceding observations, and will partly be supplied in the remarks on the Deluge.

Some other modes of conciliation, not more successful than those here reviewed, have been noticed in the larger edition of this work.

FINAL RESULT.

We believe we have indisputably demonstrated, both by positive and negative proofs, that, with regard to astronomy and geology, the Biblical records are, in many essential points, utterly and irreconcilably at variance with the established results of modern researches. We must acquiesce in the conviction, that, at the time of the composition of the Pentateuch, the natural sciences were still in their infancy, and that the Hebrews were in those branches not materially in advance of the other ancient nations. But, on the other hand, they succeeded completely in removing, even from their physical

conceptions, every superstitious and idolatrous element. It will be the task of the following notes on the first chapters to prove this proposition. We have cleared the way for a plain and unsophisticated interpretation. We are fettered by no preconceived dogmatical views. We shall be enabled to attempt a conscientious penetration into the notions of the Hebrew historian; and shall in no instance be induced to force upon his words, by a contorting and delusive mode of exposition, our modern systems of philosophy. Thus may we hope to secure a positive advantage for Biblical science.

GENESIS I.

SUMMARY.—God created the matter of which heaven and earth consist (ver. 1); He brought the chaotic mass into shape and order; in six days He produced successively light, the heaven, the seas, the dry land and vegetation; the celestial orbs; the fishes and birds; the beasts and man (ver. 2—30). He approved of His works, both individually and collectively (ver. 31). He rested on the seventh day, and blessed and sanctified it (ii. 1—3).

1. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

1. The very opening sentence of Genesis manifests the infinite superiority of the Mosaic notions over all the systems of antiquity; it separates distinctly monotheism from the blind rule of physical powers, and from that dualism which recognises a good and an evil principle in the creation of the world; it marks the eternal division between Mosaism and paganism, between God and Nature; for it evidently represents *God* as the Creator and *primary* Cause of the Universe; perhaps in *intentional* opposition to the very far-spread ancient theory of an *original matter*, out of which the world was supposed to have been framed, or of the eternity of heaven and earth. The world, with its objects, is *generated*; it is neither identical with God; nor a part of His substance; nor the product of chance or of stern fate; nor the result of an internal or external necessity, "as though God needed anything"; it is the free emanation of the *will* of God; it is the spontaneous work of His *love*. He alone was before all time, from all eternity; "before the mountains were brought forth, and before the earth and the world were formed." But yet, He is not a lifeless abstraction of *Time*, as the *Zeruane Akerene* of the Persians, who neither animates man's hopes nor cheers him in his despair; who neither feels nor rouses sympathy; who is a shadow rather than a personal spirit; and who, in order to be accessible to the human capacities, is compelled to produce the two inimical deities Ormuzd and Ahriman, who, similar to the Osiris and Typhon of the Egyptians, dispute with each other the government of the world, and thus perpetuate on earth the din and fury of intestine war.

The Creator of the world is also its Ruler; for to Him alone belongs all power from eternity to eternity. The Bible does not, like the systems of philosophy, commence with a laborious proof of the existence of a Creator; this truth is the very foundation on which it rests; it is assumed as undisputed, and requires no demonstration: the Hebrew *cosmogony* alone is not preceded by a *theogony*. It is a fallacy to think, that the Egyptian cosmogony is essentially similar to that of Moses, who is still too often represented as nothing more than the expounder of the ordinary Egyptian wisdom. It is true, that in a most interesting Egyptian document, the celebrated Book of the Dead, Osiris is described as the creator of the world and of mankind; as the preserver of all creatures; as the eternal ruler and judge of

the universe; and the holy avenger of every crime and impiety; but that Osiris is far from being an immaterial deity; he is the sun and his light; he produces, therefore, first the other seven great planetary gods; then the twelve minor deities who represent the twelve parts of the Zodiac, and who, in their turn, produce the twenty-eight gods who preside over the stations of the moon, the seventy-two companions of the sun, and other deities. Osiris is, hence, denominated the creator and king of the gods; and, if he is called "light of the world," this is no figurative, but a strictly literal expression. It is, therefore, incorrect to infer that, in the belief of the Egyptians, God created the world out of nothing; that there was no chaos; and that He was from eternity. —But, further, Osiris is, in the later mythology of the Egyptians only, the creator of the world, and the highest god; in the earlier myths this was Kneph who produced the germ of the world from his mouth; or Phtha, corresponding with the Greek Vulcan; or Pan; or Ammon, who represents the productive power of the sun (*Ra*), who is most frequently called the creator of the universe, who was worshipped throughout all Egypt, but had his chief temple in Heliopolis or *On* (light), and who was, from the earliest times, viewed as a trinity of gods, consisting of Ammon Ra (the creator), Osiris Ra (the fructifying power), and Horus Ra (the dispenser of light). And ancient Greek writers give a very different account of the Egyptian cosmogony; they affirm expressly, that the ancient inhabitants of Egypt, when they looked with astonishment at the wonders of creation, were induced to the belief that there are two eternal gods, the authors of all things; namely, the sun and the moon, or Osiris and Isis; they introduce a complete theogony, and narrate how Phtha (Vulcan), the inventor of the fire, was succeeded by Saturn, who begat, with Rhea, the principal deities, Osiris and Isis, Typhon and Nephytis; they relate, that the wicked Typhon attempted to destroy Osiris, who had undertaken a distant expedition to all the countries between the Nile and the Indus; that he forced him into a chest, and brought it to the river, from whence it was carried into the sea; that, however, Isis, the faithful wife of Osiris, contrived to recover the chest; but that Typhon found it again, and cut the body into many pieces which he scattered over the land, but which Isis buried wherever she found them, except one member which the fishes had eaten, and in honour of which an annual festival was celebrated: at last Osiris returned from the lower world, and instructed his son Horus to avenge him; Typhon was now attacked, and perfectly defeated. In whatever way these myths may be interpreted, whether Osiris and Isis are regarded as the sun and moon; or as the Nile and the earth; or as the representatives of the early civilisation of Egypt, which was from thence spread over the whole ancient world, whilst Typhon is the symbol of the destructive hot wind (samoom); or of the tyrannical winter; or of dark ignorance: it is evident that all these conceptions lie entirely within the circle of paganism, and that they were no more the source of the Mosaic doctrine than any other eastern tradition. For, the God of Moses is not only all-powerful and all-wise, which qualities even rude and barbarous tribes have bestowed upon their deities, but He is also all-loving; independent of any other existence, creating all, Himself not created; and, therefore, unchangeable; a free and absolute Being, because subject to no necessity; omnipresent, because He watches with provident care over His works. He is at once the most perfect Ideal, and the completest Reality; His thoughts are creations: — thus, the very beginning of the Biblical canon reveals the highest, the most sublime attributes of God; it contains, as it were, the leading principle on which the whole Scriptural system is based, the vigorous root from which the imperishable stem of religious truth has sprung.

God is the author not only of matter (ver. 1), but of its wise and wonderful distribution in heaven and earth (ver. 2 *et seq.*). He called the universe into being out of nothing, not out of formless matter

2. And the earth was dreariness and emptiness, and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God hovered over the face of the waters.

co-eval in existence with Himself. He alone is the fountain and the origin of the world. Nor did He resign his power as Creator after having produced matter with its eternal attributes. The same will which has created the universe, suffices to reduce it into absolute nothing, or to suspend its laws, and temporarily to change its course, that is, *to perform miracles.*

2. Matter was created, but it was a shapeless mass; the elements were mixed in irregular confusion; it was a *chaos.* This gloomy state of things prevailed through the whole universe, both in that part which later formed the heaven and in that which was to constitute the earth. But the framing of the latter is the first object of our text; the arrangement of the heaven is reserved to a later act of creation (vers. 6—8, 14—19).—This elementary state of nature is thus described by Ovid (Metam. i. 6—9)—

"One was the face of Nature, if a face;
Rather a rude and indigested mass,
A lifeless lump, unfashioned and unframed,
Of jarring seeds, and justly chaos named."

The chief characteristic of the indistinct and dreary chaos is *darkness*; matter was still deprived of the rays of light, which can alone manifest order and beauty.

"No Sun was lighted up, the world to view;
No Moon did yet her blunted horns renew."

It is true, that heathen writers introduce the same feature; the Orphic songs describe chaos as a black night, enveloping every object with its gloomy wings; they state that at first, primeval night reigned supreme; and sometimes they even mention night as the mother of the gods, and of men. The chaos of the Bible produced, by the word of God, this beautiful world of order and blessing; what did the primeval night of the classical Greeks generate? It brought forth cruel fate, terrible necessity, and death; it engendered mocking Momus and woeful care, the ruthless Parcæ and terrible Nemesis, and fraud, and criminal love, and strife; it was the parent of labour and trouble — of tearful sorrow, and struggle, and death — of famine, war, and carnage — of falsehood, perjury, and contempt of the laws — and of every crime. The Greek gods produce evil out of evil; to the God of the Hebrews there exists no evil, for He has created all things for the purposes of His wisdom, and He converts confusion into harmony.—The Chaldeans believed that during the chaos all was darkness and water, peopled by mis-shapen monsters; the Egyptians express it by a confusion of the limbs and parts of various animals; and the Phoenicians describe it as boundless, through many ages, and pervaded by a wind of black air, and dark as hell.

The ancient and purer Hindoo religion, as expounded in the Vedas and in the laws of Manu, teaches that originally the universe was involved in darkness; there was no visible trace of a world, or of water, or sky, nor aught above it; all was imperceptible, destitute of every distinct attribute, neither accessible to reason nor to the senses, and entirely immersed in sleep; that, however, after the expiration of a day of Brahman, which is equivalent to 4320 millions of human years, the great That, existing through itself, immaterial, and undistinguishable by mortal eyes, breathing without affiation, infinite and eternal, the soul of all beings and the mystery of all understandings, felt a desire in his mind which became the original productive seed; he dispersed the darkness; removed the husk in which the universe was enveloped; and, by the power of contemplation, made visible the

world, with its five elements and other principles, so that it shone in resplendent brilliancy and purity. The Hindoo legends approach, indeed, the Mosaic narrative perhaps more nearly than any other Eastern tradition; for they further narrate, that the original soul of the universe thought: "I will create worlds;" and water was called into existence; into its floods the spirit deposited a germ, which developed itself into an egg of beautiful lustre; and in this egg Brahman, or the Supreme Being, created himself; the waters bore the appellation, Spirit of God (*Nara*); and as they were his first place of motion (or *Ayana*), he is designated "moving on the waters" (or *Narayana*). These striking analogies remind us that, even with regard to the highest religious ideas, the historical student is justified in searching for their common national source, and that it is the philosopher's task to investigate psychologically their common mental origin. But we must not suppose that the Hebrew writings lose by such comparisons; they easily maintain their indisputable superiority: for in the Hindoo cosmogony, the great invisible God produced Brahman, and it was Brahman only who became the parent of all rational beings and of the cosmos: the Supreme Spirit and the Creator are two distinct persons. Thus the purity of the conception is destroyed; a leaning towards pantheism is the pervading principle; the highest god created also a number of inferior deities (*devas*), with divine attributes and pure souls, bearing, like man, the divine image, mortal like him, and dependent on human actions; and a host of invisible genii (*sadyas*). And the Creator, how different is he from the God of Moses! He did not only produce the founders of the four principal Hindoo castes from his mouth, his arm, his thigh, and his foot, respectively; not only did the sun spring from his eye, the moon from his mind, the air from his ear, and fire from his mouth—so that every element was, in a grossly pantheistic manner, considered as himself, or as a part of his existence: but he divided his body, into two parts, a male and a female half, and begat thus the divine Viradj, called "I"; who, on his part, through himself, by a rigid devotion, and by also dividing himself into two moieties, produced Manu; the latter, in the same manner, called the ten great saints (*maharshis*) into existence; who, under Manu's direction, created again seven other Manus, the gods, and a great number of powerful saints, the gnomes, giants, vampyres, a great variety of other creatures, the celestial phenomena, and mankind. Thus the direct sovereignty and majesty of the great Spirit is entirely lost by the vast number of intermediate agencies; the Creator and the creatures are not discriminated; a hundred and one gods assisted in framing the universe; the prayers of the Vedas teem with mythological allusions to the personified elements and planets; and many gods are subsequent to the production of the world.

Now Brahman is indeed defined as *That* whence all beings are produced, by which they live, and towards which they all tend; but even wise and holy men were uncertain whether this *That* was food, or life, or intellect, or happiness. Brahman is further, indeed, the great intelligence, the lord of creatures; but the gods are likewise he, and so are the five primary elements; he is only the first-born; he shares his divine nature with the sun, the moon, the air, and the water. It is, therefore, scarcely more than an isolated and transitory conception, if Brahman is occasionally described with the purest and sublimest attributes: none can comprehend him; his glory is so great that no image can express it; he pervades all regions; he is the immortal soul, eternally merged in profound contemplation; he is imperishable, incorporeal, and invisible, without form and quality, unaffected by worldly passions, unchangeable and omnipresent; in him the universe perpetually exists; in him this world is absorbed; he alone knows the mystery of creation, preservation, and destruction; he is the providence which governs all worlds. But these elevated notions are incessantly

mixed with the grossest superstitions and the most palpably pantheistic views: the Hindoo religion has a *tendency* to the highest truth, but it has not sufficient energy to follow that difficult path with undeviating attention; it stops and hesitates at every cross-way, and not unfrequently goes astray into barren deserts, or dark, entangled forests. Again, it is admitted even by philosophical inquirers into the literature of the Hindoos, that those abstract ideas do not represent the popular views, but are the speculations of some gifted sages, who strove to rise above the degrading materialism of the multitude. This remark holds true to such a degree, that Brahman never became the god of the people; that he never obtained a public worship; and that no temples were erected to his honour. He was exclusively the god of the priests and of the theologians, who from him assumed the name of Brahmans. How different is all this from the God of the Hebrews, and His relation to people and priests! — But we remark further, with peculiar emphasis, that, according to a belief of the Hindoo philosophers, the whole creation was not the result of spontaneous love, but of *a momentary forgetfulness of the Supreme Spirit*, who once accidentally was stirred from his usual motionless rest and sleep-like contemplation: the world is *the result of a mistake*, which can only be corrected by its destruction; the things are but created in order to perish. This tragical and gloomy idea pervades the whole life of the Hindoos; its first consequence was the notion of the transmigration of souls; for as the latter are ultimately to be swallowed up in Brahman, who, however, receives them only when they have attained a state of moral perfection, they again and again enter a material form, until they are entirely purified; but even these renewed attempts at a higher moral state are a vain and hopeless effort; for it is taught, that with the same immutable necessity as the same seasons always produce the like kind of vegetation, the souls spontaneously follow, at each successive return on earth, the same course which at their original creation was assigned to them, whether this be malice or kindness, virtue or vice, noble veracity or base falsehood. Thus man is the victim of the most oppressive fatalism. And just as the world has been created by accident, so it will be dissolved, when the Great Soul falls asleep and rests in profound slumber; until having gathered in again all elementary principles, it enters into a vegetable or animal seed, assumes a new form, awakes again, and after the expiration of 4320 millions of years, or one day of Brahman, reproduces the world, which is thus alternately brought forth and destroyed, according to the condition and nature of the Supreme Spirit: but after the lapse of a hundred years, consisting each of 360 days of Brahman, the universal destruction takes place, and Brahman himself will cease to exist. Whereas, therefore, in the Bible, the world, and everything that is created, is by God Himself declared to be perfect and excellent, in the laws of Manu the world is called a horrible creation, which unavoidably and incessantly works its own destruction.

We cannot, therefore, be surprised to find in the later Hindoo literature the most extravagant notions as the natural development of such cosmogonic theories; the world was believed to owe its origin to the desire of the deity "to diversify himself"; or it was thought that man and the universe were nothing but the mockery of a dream; idle shadows, which disturb the serenity of god; his ideal delusions, or Maya's, and destined to exist only so long as he is in a state of reverie. The later Buddhists regarded as the Creator *Tao*, or the immeasurable *Space*, which produced *one*; after which one produced *two*, and two *three*, till three brought forth all beings: this Tao is without action, and without thought; calm and self-subsistent. Such a motionless creating principle leads naturally to the inactive quietism which is the ideal of Buddhist felicity and perfection, but which is the reverse of that life of useful but unselfish activity which the

God of the Bible demands. "The spirit that moved on the waters" (*Narayana*), whose attributes had never been understood or acknowledged by the people, was deprived of its originally pure character, and converted into a separate god Vishnu. It was believed that the latter assumed nine successive incarnations; that he offered himself up as a sacrifice, in order to create the world; and that he resigned his divine nature, and came down upon earth in human form, in order to deliver the world from evil. Besides Vishnu, Siva was added to Brahman, as a principal god; first both were equal, and then even superior to his power; these three, together with their wives, form the trinity, or trimurtis, representing the Creation, Preservation, and Destruction of the World. The old cosmogony of the Hindoos is, indeed, so indistinct and ambiguous, that it left ample scope for the most diverging interpretations; very different, and almost opposite, schools have founded their systems on the same texts. The Vedas and the Book of Manu, those ancient sources of Hindoo literature, gave rise and support, on the one hand, to the *Puranas*, with their gross and material idolatry; and, on the other hand, to the *Vedantas*, with their sublimizing and spiritualizing speculations. From the four Vedas alone eleven hundred different schools derived their tenets; and much disagreement and confusion exist in the Hindoo theology with regard to the gradation of persons intervening between the Supreme Being and the created world. No distinct system of theology is derivable from the Vedas; in one place, Indra is the most powerful and the first of all gods; in another the sun: now three deities, the earth, the air, and the heaven, are mentioned, as equally potent and primeval, and now it is the great Spirit which is the soul of all beings; and often very different attributes are ascribed to the same deity. This vagueness of conception prevailing in the ancient religious books of the Hindoos, is acknowledged as a fundamental defect, even by the most profound students and the most zealous admirers of Hindoo literature. No aberration of this kind could happen with regard to the Hebrew cosmogony. The first chapter of Genesis is, in spite of its sublimity and grandeur, so plain and simple, so calm and unequivocal, that a fanciful exposition is utterly impossible, and can only be attempted by those who defy all reasonable rules of a sound interpretation. If Mosaism has even been derived from the same soil as many other Eastern religions, the germs developed themselves freely and independently, and reached a degree of loftiness and vigour which they attained in no other creed.

The vast matter of the earth was covered with water, "as with a garment." But over this shapeless chaos works, in mysterious majesty, *the spirit of God;* He hovers over the waters; He is not identical with matter, but its Lord, whose will stirs the stagnant mass; the chaos is no cause, not even a secondary one, of the world; and the infinitude of His wisdom and His love prepares a creation of order and beauty. The Cosmos is about to be framed.

If we were not accustomed to the most phantastical contortions of the Hebrew text, we should express our utter astonishment at the opinion, that between the first and second verse lie the fall of the angels, and the warfare of Satan, not mentioned for some recondite reason; that the consequence of this rebellion was the transformation of the originally beautiful world into a fathomless abyss, the government of Satan — but that hell and Satan were ultimately conquered by the spirit of God that watched over this desolation, so, however, that many beautiful parts of nature have been disfigured by the diabolical powers, and show no longer the pure work of God; or that "the first creation, which arose and perished thousands and, perhaps, millions of years before the appearance of man, was a failure, an ungodly perversion, in consequence of the interposition of Satan and his powers." The aberrations of profound minds, if they unfortunately indulge in mystic spe-

3. And God said, Light be: and light was. 4. And God saw the light, that *it was* good: and God divided

culations, are more dangerous, and often more absurd, than the empty superficiality of shallow reasoners. We suppress, therefore, the almost endless reveries which have been based on the simple grandeur of our chapter; incredible theories have been deduced from it; ingenuity and sophistry have been equally busy; truth and error have been mixed; almost all metaphysical theories of heathen and Christian philosophers have been discovered in our text by far-sighted thinkers; — till, at last, the quiet, impartial critic, astonished and bewildered, sees himself launched on an infinite sea of mysticism, and needs all the energy of his mind to reach again the safe shores of common sense. Will our readers blame us, if we do not notice this wild, and often unintelligible, jargon? We, for our own part, confess, that nothing but the sense of the importance of our subject has armed us with the necessary patience and courage.

We resign with reluctance, from want of space, the very interesting task of making a systematic comparison between the Mosaic and the other ancient cosmogonies. The analogies are both surprising and instructive. At every step we meet with familiar features. But the Biblical account combines and concentrates the valuable elements which are scattered in all, whilst it is absolutely free from the perverse and often absurdly phantastical traits which disfigure the rest. It has a unity of principle prevading the whole, which we elsewhere seek in vain; and that principle, too, is at once simple, sublime, and eternal. The materials for such comparison are spread in numerous ancient works. We have, however, in the notes on the first chapters, tried to point out the similarity or divergence, wherever this was feasible in a brief compass.

First Day. Light. Ver. 3—5.

The dreary, shapeless matter of the earth was sufficiently prepared for assuming order and organisation; God's loving care had begun to spiritualise the inert mass by bringing its elements into motion. But as long as it was enclosed in darkness, it had, practically, no existence; in order to call it positively and virtually into being, it was necessary to make it visible — and, therefore, the first Divine act was the creation of Light; or rather its separation from the obscurer elements in which it had been enveloped (ver. 4). It will not be necessary to enter deeply into the long-disputed question, how light was possible before the formation of the celestial bodies from which it emanates (ver. 14—19). It will suffice to remind the reader, that ancient, and even more recent philosophers suppose, beyond the sphere of the most distant stars, a region entirely luminous, an empyrean heaven; and they believe, that the nebulæ are this bright region seen through an opening. Anaxagoras maintained, that the upper or ethereal world is filled with fire. Seneca observed, that, occasionally, apertures are formed in the heavens through which we perceive the flame occupying the background. Huygens, in his description of the nebulæ of Orion, remarks: "One would say, that the celestial vault, being rent in that part, allows us to see the more luminous regions beyond"; and Halley writes, with regard to the nebulæ of Orion and Andromeda: "In reality, these spots are nothing else than the light coming from the regions of the ether filled with a diffuse and inherently luminous matter"; and the same astronomer, by no means orthodox in his theological views, remarks, with reference to our question: "These nebulæ reply fully to the difficulty which has been raised against the Mosaic description of creation, in asserting that light could be generated without the sun. Nebulæ manifestly prove the contrary; several, in effect, offer no

between the light and between the darkness. 5. And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And it was evening, and it was morning; one day.

6. And God said, Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it be a division between the waters

trace of a star at their centre." Whether the Hebrew writer, in supposing that light existed independently of the sun, intended to convey a similar idea, it is difficult to decide; he nowhere makes a distinct allusion to this theory; he seems, more probably, to hold, that on the first day the luminous *matter* was created, spreading through infinite space in its rarified state; but that, on the fourth day, it was *condensed* into the light-giving bodies for the benefit and advantage of the earth. Thus, we have another instance of the two chief acts of Divine creation; first, the production of matter, and then its arrangement and organization; it was necessary to point out, that light did not exist before the world; that man does not owe it to the sun or the moon, which it is, therefore, a criminal folly to worship; that it was not the primary matter of the universe, as Heraclitus and Empedocles maintained; but that it sprang into being by God's will and command. That, indeed, according to modern theories, luminous nebulæ are the first materials of the world, if we go back to the origin of all things; that the sun is in itself no bright orb, but that its brilliancy is emitted from a highly luminous atmosphere which surrounds it, and which does not prevent the body itself from being inhabited; that the appearance of the zodiacal light or the aurora borealis seems to prove the existence of luminous matter besides the sun; and that light, like heat, exists in a latent or concealed state in every object of nature: — these suppositions affect in no manner the Biblical narrative, neither where they are in harmony, nor where they are in antagonism with it; they concern us as little as the ludicrous query, whether God had, before the creation of light, been in darkness; or the still more absurd question, how God passed His time before the Creation; and we leave these improprieties to the well-known severe and ironical strictures of St. Augustin and Luther. We might *compare* the results of our scientific researches with the notions of antiquity; this is a task both important and interesting; but we must not expect to find the former identical with the latter; we cannot wish, that the human mind should have made no progress in the lapse of three millenniums: we cannot desire, that so much intense mental labour, so much earnest perseverance, should be wholly unrewarded. The human race is not, as heathen poets sang in gloomy despondency, doomed to the fruitless efforts of the Danaids, incessantly toiling, and never advancing; mankind *has* made progress in the *knowledge* of God; their *intellects* have penetrated deeper into the mysteries of His works;—let us hope, that their *hearts* have equally progressed in love and purity; that the increased light was attended by an increased warmth.

With striking sublimity the first Divine creation is introduced: "And God said, Light be, and Light was." "God speaks, and it exists, He commands, and it stands there"; the words of God imply behests; they are not mere sounds; they are things, they are essential objects; even heathen philosophers quoted our verse as an example of sublime diction; and the Hebrew language is peculiarly adapted for brief, pithy, and majestic exclamation; it is as lofty as it is concise; it is the language of religion, and the fit garment of those ideas, which were destined to humanize the world.

Light and darkness were mixed in the chaos; both are now separated, to form the distinction between day and night. But the darkness of night is widely different from the darkness of chaos; the former stands under the

and the waters. 7. And God made the expanse, and divided between the waters which *were* under the expanse, and between the waters which *were* above the expanse: and it was so. 8. And God called the expanse Heaven. And it was evening, and it was morning; a second day.

influence of universal light; the latter prevailed before the separation of the elements, an impenetrable gloom. The Persians counted, therefore, the night among the beneficial and celestial things, though no religion attached such holiness to light as that of Zoroaster, and though Ahriman, the evil principle, was the prince of darkness, who had even maliciously attempted to corrupt the pure and brilliant light of Ormuzd, but was by this god hurled back into his abodes of darkness. We need not urge, that the astronomical or sidereal day was impossible before the existence of the sun; the expression, "evening and morning, one day," denotes merely the space of time equivalent to our twenty-four hours, the civil or calendar day, for which the Hebrew language has no proper term. Other cosmogonies, also, introduce light before the sun; the Great Spirit of the Hindoos dispelled the gloom even before the creation of the water; Ormuzd dwelt from the beginning on a throne of light; Indra, the god of light, was born before all other immortal deities; and the root which in many of the Indo-Germanic languages signifies god, denotes the brilliant or light-spreading Being. The gods of light and fire, of the air and the morning-dawn, are in the system of the Vedas among the earliest gods. That the Israelites, and many other ancient nations, counted their days from evening to evening is universally known. Some tribes numbered the time ordinarily after nights; as, for instance, the Salii; and the English expressions, sennight (seven-night), fortnight (fourteen-night), etc., remind us of the same usage. But the origin of this custom is scarcely to be traced back to the reminiscence of the first day of creation, when a night of chaotic darkness was *followed* by a day of light; but it is to be referred to the *lunar* months and *lunar* years which formed the basis of chronology among many nations. In fact, in other countries the days were differently computed; the Indians and the later Babylonians reckoned them from one sunrise to the next; the Umbrians from noon to noon; the Roman priests, and the civil authorities, the Egyptians, and others, like ourselves, from midnight to midnight.

Second Day. Heaven. Ver. 6—8.

The original matter called into existence by Divine omnipotence (ver. 1) partly consisted of, and partly was covered by, water (ver. 2); this chaotic mixture, at first involved in darkness, had been surrounded with light (vers. 3—5); but it formed still one undivided mass, without shape or proportion; it was, therefore, the next act of the celestial will to separate it into two well-balanced parts, which might individually be made the basis of further creations. The firmament, or expanse of heaven (ver. 8) was framed. The clear blue sky became visible. It consists of the condensed clouds, and assumes thus the appearance of a firm and solid substance. Thus the waters were partly congregated above this firmament, partly beneath it: the conglomerated matter was divided into heaven and earth, and the firmament marks the separation. The waters above it are reserved as the stores of rain; those beneath it form partly the vapours of the air, and partly the seas, streams, and fountains of the earth.—God calls the firmament heaven (ver. 8); it is, therefore, perfectly appropriate, if the regions above the firmament

9. And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered to one place, and let the dry *land* appear: and it was so. 10. And God called the dry *land* Earth; and the gathering of the waters He called Seas: and God saw that *it was* good.—11. And God said, Let the earth bring forth vegetation, the herb yielding seed, *and* the fruit tree yielding fruit after its kind, whose seed *is* in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. 12. And the earth brought forth vegetation, the herb yielding seed after its kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed *is* in itself, after its kind: and God saw that *it was* good. 13. And it was evening, and it was morning; a third day.

are designated as "heaven of heavens," or if the birds, which soar up towards that upper region, are called "the birds of heaven."

THIRD DAY. DRY LAND AND SEAS; VEGETATION. VER. 9—13.

The earth, illumined by all-pervading light, was freed from the encumbering mass of water; an adequate portion was congregated in immeasurable distance above it, beyond a solid expanse intended to mark this eternal division between heaven and earth. But still the terrestial body was, on its entire surface, covered with the fluid element; still the earth offered the appearance of one vast dreary water-desert, without variety, without life, without beauty. God had not employed His omnipotence to no purpose; another act of His wisdom and power was necessary, to render the creations of the preceding days effective and useful. Variety was produced in the monotony of the chaotic waters by collecting them on certain places, and by making, on others, the dry land visible; and life and beauty were called forth by clothing the dry land with verdure — with the endless forms of the vegetable world. This was the work of the third day. It will, therefore, not appear an irregularity, but an admirable economy in the history of creation, that those two acts were combined on the same day. By the mere division of the dry land from the water, our cosmogony would practically have made no material advance; instead of the lifeless and uniform waters, there would have existed a lifeless and unprofitable alternation of water and land; the aspect of our globe would have undergone a change, but no essential improvement. We have, therefore, no right to ask how vegetation could exist and thrive before the creation of the sun; according to the Biblical statement, the world and its endless contents were miraculously formed by the will of God; they are not the result of mere natural laws; and that order of the days seems just designed and intended to teach that the vegetation was called forth by the omnipotence of God, and not by the influence of the solar rays. The same Power which had filled the womb of the earth with the seeds of vegetable life, made them appear and spread above its surface.—The formation of the continents, as described in our text, agrees but very remotely with that made probable by the geological researches. For whilst the latter teach us, that the same part of the globe was many times alternately water and dry land, and that volcanic eruptions were one of the chief agencies of these changes, our text declares, that at the beginning of time the will of God made, once for all, the permanent division between seas and continents; there was no

14. And God said, Let there be luminaries in the expanse of the heaven, to divide between the day and between the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years: 15. And let them be for luminaries in the expanse of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so. 16. And God made the two great luminaries — the greater luminary to rule the day, and the lesser luminary to rule the night — and the stars. 17. And God placed them in the expanse of the heaven to give light upon the earth, 18. And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide between the light and between the darkness: and God saw that *it*

upheaving of the land, but only a concentration of the floods to certain parts: not even the doctrines of the Neptunists are here expressed. Nor does the poetical and more copious paraphrase of our text in Ps. civ. 6—9, imply a greater harmony with the modern results; the retreat of the waters reveals the unevenness of the earth's surface; mountains and valleys appear; and the floods are enclosed within strict boundaries. This does not explain the formation of the strata, nor of the fossil remains of vegetables and animals — which, according to the Bible, did not yet exist in the interior of the earth — nor any of the wonders which make geology one of the most interesting and absorbing sciences. But we have willingly renounced the attempt to discover that harmony; and both science and Biblical exposition will gain by this candid understanding.

Fourth Day. The Celestial Orbs. Ver. 14—19.

The first part of the creation is finished; the framework of the universe is made, it only remains to be completed; the outlines are drawn, they need only to be filled up; the design is manifested, the execution follows of necessity. The works of the three first days point to those which await the creating power of God on the three following days; the labour of the fourth day has not so much reference to that of the third or fifth, but to that of the first day; the *luminaries* which are now called into existence, point to the *light*, which was the first of the Divine works; they are not considered as animated bodies, occupying an intermediate place between the vegetable and animal kingdoms; their motions involve no free activity; they follow the laws of a prescribed necessity; they are held in their unchangeable orbits. These luminaries are divided into three classes, the sun, the moon, and the stars; and their service is threefold: to mark the difference between day and night, to note the various seasons of the year, and to illumine the earth. They were, therefore, necessary even after the creation of light; the latter could not indicate the various changes in the aspect and condition of the earth; it was unable to guide and to direct the labours of man. But the use of the luminaries is entirely limited to the planet which we inhabit; the earth is the centre of the universe, and the hosts of heaven are intended for its service; they are the only infallible measure of time, for which man can devise but imperfect substitutes; both the sun and the moon were necessary for the computation of time; the months were determined by the latter, but the seasons and years were regulated by the former.—They are fixed in the expanse which was created on the second day; they are, originally, no part of it; they

was good. 19. And it was evening, and it was morning; a fourth day.

20. And God said, Let the waters teem with abundant creatures that have life; and fowl may fly above the earth towards the expanse of heaven. 21. And God created the great monsters, and every living creature that moveth, with which the waters teem, after their kind, and every winged fowl after its kind: and God saw that *it was* good.

are the visible wonders of the heaven: and, as the earth depends on them for light and warmth, for cheerfulness and the blessings of vegetation, they are described as having dominion over the earth; the sun during the day, and the moon during the night; but, since the moon is not always visible, since she is not, as she might have been expected to be, as constant a companion of the night as the sun is of the day, the starry host has been added to cheer the unfriendly gloom. Thus, Biblical astronomy is derived from mere optical appearance; the eye alone is the judge; the moon is represented as the second of the great heavenly orbs, and as a luminous body; the stars are nothing else but her companions; and their only end is to shed their chaste lustre on our small planet.

Fifth Day. Fishes and Birds. Ver. 20—23.

The earth had been adorned with the gay and variegated luxuriance of vegetation; but the water and the air were still empty and dreary; and breathing *life* was wanting throughout the globe. In the same order in which the different parts of the earth had been created or organized, they were now peopled with living creatures, not by spontaneous production, but by the behest of God; first the two moveable elements, water and air, and then the continents; and thus, the fifth day corresponds accurately with the second, and the sixth with the third. It is, therefore, of little importance to enquire whether, according to the Biblical account, the living beings were created in a steady gradation from the less to the more perfect; the great monsters of the sea are, perhaps, as fully organized as the birds of heaven; the works of the three last days do not succeed each other after an independent principle; they follow the arrangement of the three first days; they are their necessary complement. The fishes and the birds, therefore, are not coupled on the same day, because both are oviparous, or because both are furnished with peculiar organs fitting them to move in their respective elements; these are accidental analogies, not determining the order of the created beings, but showing still more powerfully their harmony and symmetry. But it is to be admitted, that, *on the whole*, a gradual progress is observed: first were produced the cosmical elements; then the vegetable; then the animal kingdom; and, at last, man.—The water was filled with huge fishes, which are mentioned as the majestic representatives of all greater inhabitants of the sea; and with the living creatures which abound in that element, and which comprise all its other tenants. For, it seems to have been usual to divide the fishes into two chief classes according to their size. When the air, also, had been peopled with living beings, to which, however, the earth was not entirely denied (ver. 22); God blessed all these creatures; He granted them fruitfulness and increase; for they have not, like the plants, the innate power of spontaneous propagation. But they were incapable of receiving a higher blessing; this was reserved to those more exalted beings whose animal nature was ennobled and elevated by the spark of

22. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and the fowl may multiply on the earth. 23. And it was evening, and it was morning; a fifth day.

24. And God said, Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind, cattle, and reptiles, and beasts of the earth, after their kind: and it was so. 25. And God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the

Divine Reason. And even the blessing of the fishes and birds redounds on man; for, under his dominion the whole animal creation was given (ver. 26, 28); even if he used them for his food, they would still exist in abundance.

SIXTH DAY. THE ANIMALS OF THE EARTH AND MAN. VER. 24—31.

Still was the richest and most beautiful part of the globe without its inhabitants; the ocean was filled with an endless variety of beings; the air re-echoed with the happy sounds of the winged tribes; but the luxurious vegetation bloomed in vain; and in vain shed the king of the day his cheerful beams on the lifeless plains and hills. The earth demanded its tenants; and they were brought forth on the sixth day. They were animated beings; they lent life to the calm and solitude of nature; they were created in three great classes: the grass-eating larger quadrupeds, including the beasts of burden, and the cattle; the carnivorous beasts of the forest; and the worms and reptiles.

And now was the whole earth peopled with life; all its habitable parts had their proper occupants, all perfect in their kind; but there was no unity among them, no connecting link; each passed an isolated existence, without relation to the rest;—should the creative energy of God pause here? Had He called the earth and all the heavenly hosts into existence, merely to adorn the former, and to leave it as an abode or a prey to the brute creation? God, who had produced the world from the abundance of His love, required other beings whom He might make the lords of that wondrous structure; beings more capable of comprehending and enjoying it; of embracing and understanding it as a whole; "the uniting tie of all creatures"; approaching nearer to His own spiritual nature; and stamping the creation more visibly as the work of the Infinite Mind. He decided, after solemn self-deliberation,—and Man was created. He was endowed with Divine faculties; he received a part of eternal Reason; he was formed in the image and likeness of God, which propagated itself through all generations (v. 3); and he was ordained to rule over the beasts of the field, and the fishes of the ocean. Even physically, man seems to concentrate within himself the characteristic qualities of all other animated beings; he is the type of all types of the animal kingdom, and its indisputable head; and he is organised to live in almost every part of the globe.

But which are those Divine faculties of man? how was he armed to maintain his superiority over the brute creation? His intellect penetrates, beyond the sensual perception, to unseen regions; his imagination carries him, beyond time and space, from the real to the ideal, from the finite to the infinite; his reason explores the mainspring and hidden connection of external things; his mind is almost boundless in device; it makes wonderful discoveries and inventions, either by a flash of genius, or the patient labours of experience and induction; he embodies sublime ideas in the form of art, and beauty becomes the hand-maid of truth; memory stores up the treasures of the past, and

cattle after their kind, and all the reptiles of the earth after their kind: and God saw that *it was* good.

26. And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of heaven, and over the

hands them over to reason to argue and to draw conclusions; he searches the mutual relation between cause and effect, till he ascends to the First Cause, the Creator and Governor of the world; he can trace back the past history of the planet which he inhabits through many successive revolutions, and he anticipates other stages of its existence, which silently prepare themselves in accordance with laws which his sagacity has discovered; he has been permitted to find, by mere computation, the existence and motion of distant planets; he is capable of communicating, by the medium of language, his deepest thoughts, and his innermost feelings; he may thus either instruct or delight, he may offer sympathy or implore it; the pliant voice assumes the tender tone of approbation, or the sterner accent of rebuke; a radiating smile playing on the lips betrays the emotions of the soul; and a sympathetic tear pearling from the eye bears testimony to the living fountain of love flowing within the heart; his actions are regulated after the prudent calculation of means and end, of direction and aim; he distinguishes between the eternal ideas and their transitory embodiment in the material world; he practises virtue without a selfish object; not from fear, but from love; not from motives of egotism or pleasure, but from a profound sense of his dignity; he forgets his own advantage, and strives nobly for the welfare of his fellow-men; his heart is kindled for the great objects of mankind; they are his own, his dearest interests; he considers it no sacrifice to seal a life of struggle and devotion with a death of martyrdom, if he but promotes the cause of humanity; he is determined to perish rather than to suffer ignominy, and he sacrifices his existence for glory and fame; his heart is open to the lessons of faith; he lives in his religious convictions, and knows how to combat for them; he feels gratitude to his benefactors, and he forgives the injuries of his enemies; he delights in the sociable exchange of thoughts and sentiments; and feels himself a member of a political community formed to advance his highest aims and objects; he is privileged to admire the moral order of the world; he is the instrument of God Himself, of whose majesty he gives witness; his erect form looks up to heaven; and he feels, that *there* is the true home of his soul; he alone enjoys liberty and free will, whilst the vast sidereal bodies, and even all the other organic beings, are subject to an immutable necessity; he is not the slave of a blind instinct, he reflects on himself, and examines his resolutions and his deeds; he conquers, by the strength of his mind, temptation and baseness; his moral energy masters passion and seduction; conscience, his monitor and his guide, cheers him with its applause, and torments him with its sting; he considers himself responsible for his deeds before the higher tribunal of his soul and of his Creator: he might, at least, *strive* after all this excellence; but if he yet totters and falls, he feels, that contrition and repentance will restore him to mercy; and if he is oppressed by misery and sin, if he is seized by despondency and despair, he looks with joyous confidence to a redemption beyond the grave, and is uplifted by the glorious hope of immortality. All these priceless privileges have been allotted to man exclusively; they constitute his resemblance to God, and lead him from earth to heaven; no animal, however powerfully or perfectly organized, possesses any of them; it might surpass man in strength, in size, in endurance, or in courage: man is destined to rule over it by his reason, by the power of the mind; he has, therefore, to acquire

cattle, and over all the earth, and over all the reptiles which creep upon the earth. 27. And God created man in His image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them. 28. And God blessed them, and God said to them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill

and to *conquer* that dominion which is not granted him without the exertion of his higher faculties. And this wonderful greatness and depth of human nature is our surest proof of an eternal and omnipotent Creator; it is a surer proof than even that derived from the contemplation of His marvellous works; for, it comes not from without; it is an intuitive conviction of the mind, that it is a part of a kindred, though infinitely more perfect Spirit. It is, at the same time, an irresistible argument for the doctrine, that man is different from the animals not simply in degree, but specifically; that he is not merely a more perfect animal, but forms another, a higher order of beings. We do not deny, that animals are gifted with an instinct often bordering upon mind; that their ingenuity and skill sometimes demand our highest admiration; that they are susceptible of feelings and impressions, capable of love and hatred, and, *sometimes*, of acting according to the principle of means and end; but all these facts imply only another proof of the truth, that there exists a *continuous chain* in the whole organic creation; they are the points of transition from the lower to the higher order: but man possesses, in a great degree of development, powers which are entirely denied to animals; and which just constitute his principal characteristics. His physical nature chiefly connects him with the animal creation; but that is not his dominant, it is not even his stronger part; it is subordinated to, and controlled by, his moral and intellectual powers; if man neglects his reason, he resembles the beast, he descends from the higher to the lower class of creatures; the spiritual part is his guiding principle. This is the Biblical conception with regard to the position of man; the Scriptures attribute to him a dignity "but little inferior to God Himself" (comp. iii. 22); we are not seriously concerned if some natural philosophers make him the lineal descendant of the monkey or the Batrachian.—It is true, man is physically weak, and frail, and transitory; he is, at his birth, and in his infancy, more helpless than any other creature; and the great number of his wants render him often the slave rather than the ruler of nature; he is beset with infirmity and disease; his life is frequently a series of sorrows and sufferings; his Divine nature is seldom developed, and passion or malice destroy his own happiness and that of others; the Scriptures allude to these infirmities and defects a thousand times in touching and pathetic terms; but they are never without hope and consolation; they do not abandon man to despair; they leave the solution of this superhuman mystery to God, and teach man how to bear for a while these miseries not only with fortitude, but with cheerfulness, and how to prepare the soul, by a life of love and usefulness, for a more perfect existence. If the scepticism of the Ecclesiastes, in some features, resembles the gloomy views of Pliny (vii. 1), or Lucretius (i. 223), it is, in the final results, directly opposed to them; it points to the ever-watchful eye of God, and to His love, which will dissolve all that apparent discord into endless harmonies.

Even heathens, not unfrequently, acknowledged with astonishment the wonderful power of man; they considered extraordinary accomplishments as the immediate gifts of the gods; and worshipped the deity in such distinguished mortals; they erected to them temples, and assigned to them a place among the immortal gods. We remind our readers of that magnificent song in the Antigone of Sophocles, which commences: "Many things are mighty, but nought is mightier than man"; which describes his dominion

the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of heaven, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. 29. And God said, Behold, I have given to you every herb bearing seed, which *is* upon the face of all the earth, and every

over the foaming ocean, the patient earth, and the wild beasts of the forests; it then extols the "language and lofty wisdom of man"; he has but one unconquerable enemy, death; but him even he can, if not baffle, at least retard by his skill of healing; Virgil describes men as the masters of the lands and seas; and Ovid finishes his cosmogony with those remarkable verses, which possess a striking resemblance to the Hebrew words:—

"A creature of a more exalted kind
Was wanting yet, and then was Man design'd:
Conscious of thought, of more capacious breast,
For empire form'd, and fit to rule the rest:....
Thus, while the whole creation downward bend
Their sight, and to their earthly mother tend,
Man looks aloft; and, with erected eyes,
Beholds his own hereditary skies."

And he alludes to the divine origin of man with corresponding terms of admiration: "Whether the framer of the world formed him from divine elements; or whether the young earth, but lately divided from the lofty æther, still retained some seeds of its kindred heaven." Thus Xenophon observes: "The soul of man, and other human qualities, partake of the nature of the Deity"; Lucretius exclaims: "We all are born from heavenly origin"; and Hipparchus called our souls "a part of heaven." With still greater precision, the divine nature of man has been represented by eastern nations; the Babylonians maintained, that a drop of the blood of Baal is enclosed in, and animates, the body of man; the Persians were of opinion, that Ormuzd formed the first man out of the four elements, to which he added an immortal soul; it was a favourite myth of the Greeks, that Prometheus shaped a human form out of clay, and took from heaven the animating spark; and in the Koran, man is called the representative of God on earth. In the Hindoo books, man is also designated "the guardian of the world"; but his creation is most curiously related. The great Spirit drew from the waters a bodily being; he converted, by contemplation, its eye into the sun, its breast into the moon, its nostrils into air, its skin into herbs, and so forth; and then introduced all these objects into the human form. Nowhere has the godlikeness of man been conceived with such purity and sublimity as in the Scriptures; the affinity between God and man is a purely spiritual one; no natural element is mixed with it; God has no corporeality; He is only to be conceived with the mind; every image of God is severely interdicted; it would, indeed, be impossible to represent Him to the external eye; and if sometimes bodily terms are used with regard to Him, it is in the same manner as when the Bible speaks of the eyes and wings of the sun, or of the pinions and eye-lids of the morning dawn; if man, therefore, has a resemblance to God, it can only be that of the internal faculties, of reason, of imagination, of love; it is only by these higher gifts that he conquers nature, and sways over the brute creation; the expressions, "in our image, after our likeness," presuppose no visible form of the Deity; they are no remnants of heathen notions among the Hebrews; they do not deserve the hostile attacks of many modern critics. It is nothing less than a destruction of the very foundation of Biblical theology to attribute to God any quality of corporeity. God governs the world by His infinite reason; is it astonishing that those who were, in some degree,

tree, in which *is* the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for food; 30. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of heaven, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein *there is* life, *I have given* every green herb for food: and it was so. 31. And God

destined to be the rulers of the earth, should resemble Him in that power by which alone they can uphold their superiority? And this idea of the god-like nature of man remained no empty theory; it was made the basis of almost all practical duties, of all obligations of man towards man; murder was a violation of the image of God; charity was a loan made to Him; and the whole system of social life was pervaded by that elevating, sanctifying principle (see Commentary on Exod., p. 333).

The lifeless creation was produced for the living beings; vegetation was destined for men and animals; no being "with a living soul" was originally intended as the food for another living creature; man was assigned to eat the seed-giving plants, and grain, and the fruit of trees; to the animals were left the grass and the herbs (vers. 29, 30). Although man was permitted the dominion over the beasts of the field, the fishes of the water, and the birds of the air, he was not allowed to extend that dominion to the destruction of life; he was the master, not the tyrant, of the animal kingdom — he might use, but not annihilate it; —

"Heaven's attribute was universal care,
And man's prerogative to rule, but spare."

Every living being has a right to exist, and to enjoy its existence; God had blessed the animals with fruitfulness; man was not allowed to counteract that blessing by killing them for his sport or his appetite. God created the world for peace and concord, no being should rage against another; the sin of man brought warfare among the living creatures; the cries of agony rent the air; man and beast raged among themselves, and against each other; the state of innocence was succeeded by the age of passion and violence; and it was only after the fall of man that animal food was permitted to him (ix. 3). But in the time of the Messiah, when sin will again disappear from the world, and innocence will be restored to all living creatures, vegetation alone will furnish the food of the animal creation; and "the wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the bullock, and dust shall be the serpent's food." Almost all nations have had a golden age; and it is invariably a principal trait of that happy time that men abstained from killing animals, that —

"Content with food which Nature freely bred,
On wildings and on strawberries they fed;
Cornels and bramble-berries gave the rest,
And falling acorns furnished out a feast."

It is known that Pythagoras and his followers considered it a hideous crime to kill animals for human food; they believed that the earth produced in abundance vegetable provisions, that man might avoid the guilt of murdering harmless creatures, and that he is only entitled to defend himself against wild beasts which would be dangerous to his safety. The exposition of these Pythagorean doctrines is, perhaps, one of the most masterly efforts of the genius of Ovid (Metam. xv. 75—142); we wish our space permitted us to introduce it here; for it is a subject of absorbing interest, which will, at no distant period, command the attention of civilised societies: the arguments have recently been again surveyed; and new combats have been fought. It cannot, indeed, be our intention to enter into the question of vegetarianism; we

saw every thing that He had made, and, behold, *it was* very good. And it was evening, and it was morning; the sixth day.

shall not stop to enquire to which side the organisation of the human body points; our object is distinctly to impress that, according to the Bible, man, in the state of innocence, was commanded to content himself with vegetable food, and that it is the aim of mankind to return to that state. That question, therefore, may be decided on perfectly free ground, and on its own merits; it is in no way prejudiced by Scriptural doctrines; and we add the remark, that Greek poets represent the enmity of the noxious beasts against man as a consequence of man's sanguinary persecution of the animals. It is the retaliation of revenge. It was only in the age of corruption that "the beasts were caught in snares, or deceived with bird-lime; that the spacious lawns were encompassed with hounds, and the broad rivers were lashed with nets." The books of Manu rigorously interdict the Brahmins from the killing of animals, except for sacrifices; but as these were often used as a pretext for an unlawful appetite, they were entirely forbidden. The original offerings of the Hindoos consisted of the juice of a certain plant (*soma*), mixed and prepared in a peculiar manner, or of melted butter. It is one of the five great laws of the Buddhists to destroy no living creature; and several other Eastern sects pronounced the same principle.

God had created the world, adorned and peopled the earth, and placed upon it as ruler a being cognate with His own nature; He saw His works, and He approved of them in their totality; each individual part contributed to enhance the harmony of the whole; "He rejoiced at His works"; they were a worthy emanation of His mind and His will.

Man and woman are introduced with equal rights; they share the government of the earth; they bear both the same image of God; they are ennobled with the same soul, although it may, in women, dwell in a weaker frame; both may claim the same prerogatives; and if there is a difference, it is in the beautiful comparison of Luther, that "man is like the sun of heaven, woman like the moon; whilst the animals are the stars, over which sun and moon rule."

CHAPTER II.

1. Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their host. 2. And on the seventh day God had finished His work which He made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He made. 3. And

1—3. The design of God is executed; the world is framed, organised, and peopled; He has placed upon the earth a being which mirrors, in some degree, His own Divine nature, which was henceforward to work and to create on the earth. Man is the culminating point to which the energy of God had tended; and as he resembles God in his nature, he should imitate Him in his activity; the work of God should be the example and the type of the work of man. The Scriptures teach man the attributes of God, only in order to show him his own ideal aims; and thus they relate, that God rested after the six days of creation, to impress upon man that the end of all work is rest; that contemplation is the fruit of exertion; that spiritual life is both the aim and the reward of material life. The Sabbath of God is the type of

God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: for on it He rested from all His work which God created and produced.

the Sabbath of man; it is here introduced to enforce its paramount holiness, its Divine character, and seems designedly stated with a certain copiousness and abundance of diction. God did not require rest: He "is never fatigued nor weary" (Isa. xl. 28); He creates by His mere will, by His thought; He commands, and it exists; He is always spiritual, pure, sublime; He is free from all lower propensities. But in man, the spiritual and physical elements are in perpetual warfare; the victory is often uncertain; it is not always on the better side; he has to make great exertions for small results; the power is limited; the obstacles are many, while the aim is distant and the time brief. Does he not require seasons for reflection, when the soul takes breath in the wild race of daily toil? when the mind surveys the way, comparing that which has been traversed with what remains to be performed? when the conflict is silent, and the equipoise is restored? when man approaches again to that state of internal harmony which is the centre of his resemblance to God? The Sabbath is, then, a *necessary* institution; it is indispensable for a *religious* life; and that Book which is intended as the fountain of religion, places the origin of the Sabbath at the beginning of its pages; it makes the Sabbath the corner-stone of the *moral* world; and, therefore, leads its first cause back to the creation of the *physical* world. It is impossible to mistake this connection; it is implied in the whole tenour of this section; it is clearly pronounced in the most solemn part of the Biblical doctrines, the Ten Commandments (Exod. xx. 11): the Books of Moses are throughout pervaded by the same principles; they aim, in all parts, at the sanctification of man, after the prototype of Divine perfection.

II.—PARADISE AND THE FALL.

CHAPTERS II. 4, TO III. 24.

I. GENERAL VIEW.

THE Creation was finished. We might imagine we see the blooming meadows, the finny tribes of the sea, and the numberless beasts of the field; and in the midst of all this beauty and life, man with his help-mate, as princes and sovereigns. But more; the Creation was not only finished, it had been approved of in all its parts; and, as a symbol of the perfect completion of His task, God was represented to rest, and to bless that day which marked the conclusion of His labours. But now the narrative seems not only to pause, but to go back; the grand and powerful climax seems at once broken off, and a languid repetition appears to follow; another cosmogony is introduced, which, to complete the perplexity, is, in many important features, in direct contradiction with the first.

It would be dishonesty to conceal these difficulties; it would be weak-mindedness and cowardice; it would be flight instead of combat; it would be an ignoble retreat instead of victory;—we confess, there is an apparent dissonance. In the first cosmogony, vegetation is immediately produced by the will of God;[1] in the second its existence is made dependent on rain and mists, and the agricultural labours:[2] in the first, the earth

[1] i. 11, 12. [2] ii. 5, 6.

emerges from the waters, and is, therefore, saturated with moisture; in the second, it appears dry, sterile, and sandy: in the first, man and his wife are created together;[1] in the second, the wife is formed later, and from a part of man:[2] in the former, man bears the image of God, and is made the ruler of the whole earth;[3] in the latter, his earth-formed body is only animated by the breath of life, and he is placed in Eden to cultivate and to guard it:[4] in the former, the birds and beasts are created before man;[5] in the latter, man before birds and beasts.[6]

Now, it has been tried to reconcile all these differences; many have, by specious reasons, argued away their existence altogether; sophistry has attempted bolder feats; those who dreaded the responsibility, have leaned themselves on some great authority; they have taken refuge under the wings of some revered name; others have covered the weakness of their arguments by copious declamations, or violent remonstrances; while others have transferred the whole difficulty upon dogmatic ground; they have made it a question of faith; they have assumed a triumphant air of sanctimony, and silenced their opponents by branding their names with the epithets of sceptic and infidel. An abundant number of books has been written on this subject; much sagacity, and still more learning have been wasted; but it was forgotten, that the Scriptures speak in the ordinary language of man; that they are profound, but not mysterious; that they are given to assist, not to obscure, the human intellect. We shall, therefore, not attempt an artificial solution; those differences are too obvious to be overlooked or denied; we have examined the question with the minuteness and anxiety due to its importance; we admit freely, that the second account contains some features not in accordance with the first; and that it is manifestly composed in a different style. We admit this; but we admit no more. We deny the conclusions which might be drawn from this concession. The second account is no abrupt fragment; it is not unconnected with the first; it is no superfluous repetition; it leads, on the contrary, the Biblical ideas a most important step onward: it introduces new elements of the highest moment for the history of the whole human race. It is, *essentially, a continuation* of the first chapter.

It is not difficult to prove this position. Impartiality will lead with safety through this apparent maze; let us follow its guidance. — The second account contains by no means a complete cosmogony; it is far from offering a systematic view of the origin of the world; it is limited to a few particular outlines; namely, the production of vegetation, the planting and nature of Eden, and the creation of man and beasts. Why does it not mention the expanse of heaven and the seas, light and the celestial luminaries? why not even the fishes? If these omissions are arbitrary, and if it could be proved, that the former objects are aimlessly introduced, it would certainly follow, that the second account is a fragment superfluously inserted; that the history of creation is devoid of unity and design; and that the commentator must expound each section as a separate portion, unconnected with the rest. But this is not the case. Arbitrariness has nowhere presided in the narrative of the creation. A distinct plan is manifest both in what is omitted, and in what is introduced. The second section (which comprises the second and third chapter) describes, not the creation of the world, but exclusively the *fall of man* through disobedience. It embodies, therefore, such traits only as are indispensable for this episode; it systematically excludes all other subjects. The fall of man took place in the garden in Eden; therefore, paradise is described. It was the consequence of the eating of a forbidden fruit; hence, the creation of the vegetable kingdom is delineated. It was caused by the temptation of the serpent; and this made the creation of the beasts necessary. Eve, lastly, took a principal part in the transaction; therefore, the creation of woman is introduced. So much was necessary for the clear understanding of the momentous event, and not more;

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[1] i. 27. [2] ii. 21—23. [3] i. 26, 27. [4] ii. 7, 15.
[5] i. 20, 24, 26. [6] ii. 7, 19.

and just so much had been repeated, and not one single feature more; all the others are summarily comprized in the few introductory words—"on the day when the Lord God made the earth and the heavens" (ver. 4). This is, indeed, plan and design; this is economy and deliberation; this is not accidental, nor in the manner of abrupt fragments. The second account has, then, been composed with clear consciousness after and with reference to, the first; the author of the Pentateuch added to an ancient document on the creation, the history of man's disobedience, and its consequences; and, hence, we can account for the discrepancies above pointed out; it is, in fact, at present acknowledged by the greater part of even orthodox theologians, that he often consulted and inserted more ancient materials; like the other Biblical writers, *he sometimes mentions even his sources and authorities;* he did not reject indiscriminately all former historical documents; but he arranged, revised, or completed them. And this was the case in our instance. The first account was, therefore, composed independently of the second; but the second is a distinct and deliberate continuation of the first; it is intended as a progress in the narrative; it is not merely a detailed and specified repetition of the preceding chapter; it does not recapitulate, but it introduces new facts, and a new train of thoughts. The end of this section was different; therefore, the treatment is necessarily different.

We shall briefly sketch these new ideas.

In the first account, man is *created* in the image of God; he is *born* with the stamp and seal of the deity; in the second, he *acquires* this high prerogative only by the agency of his own will; it was only *after* the fall, that God exclaimed: "Behold, man is become as one of us to know good and evil."[7] We have here, then, the two eternal stages in the development of the human mind. First it lives in unconscious innocence; it moves in the prescribed sphere, because it has neither power nor desire to abandon it; it enjoys perfect freedom, because, as yet, the voice of an internal tyrant is not heard; it beats in peace, which no strife of discordant passions disturbs; it knows no desires but those which the playful hour at once excites and satisfies; it is troubled by no care, harassed by no anxiety; it views the world as an abode of happiness; it enjoys the pleasure which the fleeting moment furnishes, careless and unconscious of the changeful morrow. But it is not only at peace with itself, but with the whole creation, with man and beast; it feels no enmity, and knows no enemy. This is the period of the human paradise. But, alas! it cannot last long. There slumber in man two mortal enemies, his *physical* and *moral* nature; both are weak in his infancy; their character is so little marked, that they scarcely seem to obey different laws, or to pursue opposite directions;—but the war begins the very moment when both are strong enough to take up arms: then sensuality commences its fierce struggle against duty; and then morality stands arrayed in brilliant armour against sensuality; but the former is the bolder of the two opponents; it takes the offensive; the latter, woven of less hardy substance, is satisfied with the defensive; it offers a resolute resistance; but the weapons are unequal; reckless cruelty combats against meek humanity; the latter is already on the point of a fatal flight or an ignominious surrender; then, in the decisive moment appears a powerful ally, the *intellectual* power of man; it had been silently reared and strengthened for this august mission; it sides with the moral faculties; it takes the office and rank of commander; and both united subdue the tyrannical enemy; and, though unable to exterminate him entirely, they may, by concordant co-operation, defeat his malice, and frustrate his rebellion. This is the second period in man's life—his proper task on earth, the end of his pilgrimage, and of his trials. And this is the kernel of the Biblical narrative, which here engages our attention.

The innocence of childhood ceases; the warfare of youth follows; but manhood

[7] iii. 22.

restores the peace by a higher unity. Man has lost the unconscious happiness which attended the years of his ignorance; he must gain, in its stead, that higher intellectual felicity which his developed reason prepares for him, and which his knowledge teaches him to appreciate. The path of life is no more one, and undivided; it separates in numberless directions; and the pensive wanderer is compelled to choose, and to decide. Error is no more impossible; the guidance of an unpretending instinct is insufficient; and reason, often dazzled by its own rays, and still more frequently obscured by the mists of passion, is liable to go astray. Man is no more a harmless child of nature; he begins to feel, that the spirit is *above* the matter, that the soul is the lord of the body — and *he is ashamed.* But with this consciousness begins his greatness. He has achieved the boldest deed of his life. He becomes a being endowed with freedom of will. He rises above the common animal kingdom, and becomes a *moral* creature. He exchanges the paradise, in which the benign hand of Nature had placed him, for another paradise, which he owes to his own moral exertions; he can no longer endure a life of passive indolence; he refuses to receive all his wants from the hands of a benevolent father; his energies are aroused, and he feels a delight in exercising them; all enjoyments are henceforth the fruits of his own efforts; pleasure even assumes a higher dignity, since he indulges in it as the self-chosen reward of useful activity. He is no more like the stars of heaven, which move in majestic but compulsory orbits; he walks on the road of virtue not by necessity, but by free choice; he is not the slave and automaton of blind and irrational mechanism; he follows no influence but his own; he takes the impulses for all his actions from his own mind; he renders himself responsible to no tribunal but that of his own conscience; he may, in a word, convert his original passive "image of God" into an active likeness with Him, "to know good and evil." This is the progress in the two first sections of Genesis.

But this change in man is a *fall* as well as an *elevation.* The conflict includes the possibility of defeat; the wild combat of life may overwhelm the still feeble power of the intellect; the path of moral liberty is steep, and beset with dangers; the way is long and unknown; if actions assume the importance of *duties*, sin may be committed by their neglect; the acquaintance with the evil is a great step nearer transgression; if man becomes conscious of his double nature, his better part no more bears undivided sway; the moral evil is possible, although by this means only the moral good can be worked; the struggle against passion absorbs a vast proportion of his strength and his attention: but another warfare has also commenced, that against the beasts of the earth, and often, alas! against his own fellow-men; hatred lurks in the bosom and blood stains the hand; the eye flashes with rage, and the features breathe malice and destruction; — he has to encounter the serpent of the field; and often fears still more the serpent in his neighbour's heart. His enhanced ingenuity may delight him; it may secure to him dominion over the stronger denizens of the desert and the forest; but his skill may tempt him, and make him a sanguinary persecutor of his own race. He may cultivate and develop his intellectual powers, but he has to exert all his energy to maintain his moral purity; he may "know," and yet not *act;* he may reflect sublimely, but feel basely. "He who increases knowledge increases sorrow"; this elegiac doctrine of the later Hebrew sage is foreshadowed in the beginning of universal history. Guilt has succeeded innocence. Inseparable from the greatest blessing of man is his greatest evil. The dawn of intellect concludes the paradise of his childhood. Labour, and care, and sorrow commence. The struggle ends only with the last breath.

Such are the principal ideas embodied in the Mosaic narrative. The *ideas* are exclusively those of the Hebrew writer; but the *form* coincides in many respects with cosmogonies of other Eastern nations. It would be impossible to deny the resemblance; but it is far from diminishing our just admiration for the profound philosophy of the

Hebrew author. Those coincidences affect the originality of the Hebrew writings as little as the frequent resemblance of Mosaic and heathen laws; old and familiar forms were judiciously chosen to fill them with perfectly new contents; and the dry bones of the old materials have been animated by the infusion of an exalted spirit. But those analogies are neither accidental nor unimportant. They teach us, that all such narratives have a common source; that they are reminiscences of primeval traditions, modified by the different nations in accordance with their individual culture. But, what is more important, they teach us to separate, in the Mosaic narrative, what is essential from what is accessory, the substance from the garment; and, thus, to avoid many dangerous rocks, which threaten the interpretation of this important section. We shall, therefore, briefly introduce some of these analogous tales.

We begin with the most remarkable of all, that of the Persians, as related in their sacred books.

The first couple, the parents of the human race (*Meshia* and *Meshiane*), lived originally in purity and innocence. Perpetual happiness was promised to them by Ormuzd, the creator of every good gift, if they persevered in their virtue. But an evil demon (*Dev*) was sent to them by Ahriman, the representative of everything noxious and sinful; he appeared unexpectedly in the form of a serpent; he gave them the fruit of a wonderful tree, Hôm, which imparted immortality, and had the power of restoring the dead to life. Thus, evil inclinations entered their hearts; all their moral excellence was destroyed; Ahriman appeared himself under the form of the same reptile, and completed the work of seduction; they acknowledged him, instead of Ormuzd, as the creator of everything good; and the consequence was, that they forfeited, for ever, the internal happiness for which they were destined. They killed beasts, and clothed themselves in their skins; they built houses, but paid not their debt of gratitude to the Deity. The evil demons thus obtained still more perfect power over their minds, and called forth envy, hatred, discord, and rebellion, which raged in the bosom of the families.

It is unnecessary to point out the parallel features of this legend with the Mosaic narrative; it contains almost all materials of the latter; the remarkable tree, the serpent, the degradation, and fall of man. It is, then, evident, that all these traits are not specifically Mosaic; they belonged to the common traditionary lore of the Asiatic nations; they cannot, therefore, be *essential* in the system of *Mosaic* theology; they serve to represent the ideas, but are not indispensable for them; they are the vehicle used to convey certain truths, but these truths might have been expressed in thousand other shapes; the truths are unchangeable and necessary, the form is indifferent and accidental. Thus, we exclude at once many irrational explanations, and numerous absurdities with which expositors have disgraced this profound and beautiful tale. We need not to enquire, how the serpent could speak; or whether the faculty of language was, in Paradise, extended to all animals; how many feet this creature originally possessed; and whether "sin disfigured the body as well as the soul"; we need not to ascertain whether the forbidden fruit was a grape, or a fig, or an apple. We find similar features in all traditions, from the Ganges to the Nile. But, in conceding that analogy, we emphatically deny an identity. The resemblance touches merely the *form*; the *spirit* of the two narratives is as different as light and darkness, as Mosaism and paganism. In Genesis, the serpent is a real "beast of the field";[1] in the Persian myth it is the incarnation of an evil spirit, or of the evil principle itself; in our narrative, therefore, the serpent stands under the dominion of God, and is unable to avert the curse; in the Zend-avesta, Ahriman is a powerful opponent of Ormuzd; he tries to seduce man, who is the creation of the latter, and

[1] See notes on iii. 1, 4.

he prevails. In Genesis, the combat between good and evil is fought exclusively in the heart of man, whereas God governs in undisturbed majesty and unaltered goodness: in the Persian legend, the conflict existed *before* the creation of man, and it rages in the Deity itself; for, Ahriman is inimical to man because he is the adversary of Ormuzd: man has to resist the incessant attacks of an all-powerful spirit of malice, who fights with the dire weapons of disease, and poverty, and disaster; who clouds man's reason, ensnares his foot, and becomes invincible after the first triumphs. But, in the Bible, man is permitted full liberty to choose between good and evil; he has no enemy among spirits or demons; the only resistance rises in his own breast; he is sufficiently armed for victory; and, if he sins, if he forgets his Creator in the din and turmoil of life, no heavenly being exults at his fall, and uses it as a welcome instrument of his destruction; but a merciful God accepts the contrition of his heart as an efficient atonement, and receives him again into grace. And, lastly, the eating of the forbidden fruit causes, in the Persian myth, all the evils which infest the peace of man, and destroy his happiness, without one blessing to compensate for this curse. But in our narrative, man forfeits, indeed, the easy life of Paradise; he is doomed, henceforth, to work with laborious exertion; but this physical evil disappears before the spiritual glory which he has gained; he has risen above the earth; he has become like God, to distinguish, by his reason, between good and evil.—It will, we hope, be admitted, that the difference between the Mosaic and Persian narratives is greater than their resemblance; both are constructed from the same materials; but in the hands of the Hebrew author they were spiritualized, and made subservient to a sublime idea. We need, then, not to be afraid to acknowledge in the Pentateuch certain analogies with other ancient accounts. The Bible, whilst apparently accommodating itself to prevalent notions, creates new and momentous truths.

It will now suffice briefly to allude to some other similar traditions on the fall of man. The Tibetans and Mongolians believed, that the earliest human beings, though mortal, resembled the perfection of the gods; but they began soon to become covetous of property; the earth, therefore, produced a certain sweet herb; they tasted it, and all the lower appetites were aroused in them; spiritual nourishment was no longer sufficient for them; to satisfy their hunger, they were compelled to cultivate the earth; by these wearisome occupations they lost their former ethereal appearance; the brilliancy of their faces vanished; they were deprived of their wings; the years of their lives were shortened to their present limited number, and their brief existence was filled with deeds of iniquity and violence. Very similar is the tradition of the Cingalese: insatiable and unlawful desire of property was among them also the origin of degradation, of the forfeiture of that immortality for which they were destined, and of the partly incorporeal existence which they at first enjoyed.

The Hindoos distinguish four ages of the world. In the first, *justice*, in the form of a bull, kept herself firm on her four feet; virtue reigned; no good which the mortals possessed was mixed with baseness; and man, free from diseases, saw all his wishes accomplished, and attained an age of four hundred years. But in the following epochs, and in consequence of an unlimited acquisition of wealth and knowledge, justice successively lost one foot; all the honest qualities, repressed and replaced by theft, falsehood and fraud, gradually vanished by one fourth; and the duration of life was at last reduced to one hundred years. It is interesting to add, that, in their opinion, each age has its peculiar or predominant virtue; in the first reigned austerity; in the second, the divine science; in the third, the offering of sacrifices; and in the fourth, liberality alone is left on earth.

The later literature of the Indians retained but few traits of these legends, but introduced other familiar elements. Krishna, who is the incarnation of Vishnu, is represented now as treading on the bruised head of a conquered serpent, and now as entwined by it, and stung in the heel.

The Chinese, also, have their age of virtue, when nature furnished abundant food to the happy men, who lived peacefully surrounded by the beasts, exercised virtue without the assistance of science, and did not yet know what it meant to do good or evil. The physical desires were perfectly subordinate to the divine spirit in man, who had all heavenly, and no earthly dispositions; disease and death never approached him; but partly an undue thirst for knowledge, partly increasing sensuality, and the seduction of women, were his perdition; all moderation was lost, passion and lust ruled in the human mind; the war with the animals began; and all nature stood inimically arrayed against him.

We conclude with the Greek myth of Pandora, calculated to serve as a suitable transition to a very important Biblical feature, which has found no place in the preceding remarks.

The first men passed sunny days in undisturbed happiness. No labour, no care weighed upon them; their welfare was not interrupted by weakness or disease. But they could not long remain in a state of inactivity. They felt an internal impulse to search for occupation. Then Prometheus shaped a human form out of clay; in order to animate it, he stole the fire from heaven; this audacity excited the severe anger of Jupiter; he wished to punish him, and ordered Vulcan to make the first woman out of earth, who should, by her charms as well as by her faults, inflict wretchedness upon man. Thus, Pandora was produced. All the gods and goddesses adorned her with fatal gifts to ensnare the hearts of man. She received also a box, containing all imaginable evils which might make man miserable. She presented it to Epimetheus, the brother of Prometheus, who had forgotten to warn him. He opened the box; the evils were scattered all over the earth, and have ever since tormented the wretched generations of mankind. Thus, the anger of Jupiter was appeased. The god was revenged. And in this sense, Pandora is sometimes described as a horrible, infernal divinity, and classed together with Hecate and the Erinnys.

It is evident, that this myth intends, like the Mosaic narrative, to explain the origin of misery among mankind, the loss of their paradise, and the beginning of exhausting labour. The resemblance goes one step further; that, in both instances, the aspiration for divine gifts is the cause of their misery; for, fire is the symbol of wisdom and knowledge. But here the analogy ceases, and the two relations diverge as totally as the similarity of materials possibly admits.

Adam had been placed in the happiest spot on earth; surrounded by every blessing, he seemed only created for enjoyment; nothing appeared to have been forgotten to secure his felicity; his enchanted senses revelled in unbroken delights. But in the midst of all this abundance his heart felt an inexplicable void; the beauty of Paradise seemed a monotonous solitude; he searched in vain after sympathetic beings; the cold majesty of nature and her objects excited his astonishment, his admiration; but when his bosom was elevated with the grandeur of the azure vault of heaven, and the magnificent orb which travels through it in lordly calmness: his eyes strayed in vain around for creatures capable of understanding, and reciprocating his delight. He saw the animals which God had created; his nature felt interested in them; they possessed life and feeling like himself; they also seemed to enjoy the refreshing and fragrant breeze of the zephyr after the burning rays of the day. He gathered them closer round himself; he called them by name; their lively play enhanced his own happiness: but the longing of his heart remained unsatisfied; he found "no help for himself." A certain indescribable feeling lingered at the innermost depths of his heart; a power which he could not control fettered the energies of his soul; he felt that there existed a spell which might silence that turbulent craving. He was in this state of mind when God brought Eve before him. At once he had found what he had long sought; he felt his pulse beat quicker; and in an unknown transport of happiness he exclaimed:

"This time it is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." And as a further consequence, the thoughtful author adds: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and cling to his wife; and they shall be one flesh."[1]

This, then, is the place which the Mosaic records assign to the first woman. She was produced to complete the happiness of man; without her, even Paradise was a dungeon and a desert.

But what was Pandora? She was inflicted upon man as a punishment; her charms do not soothe the heart of man, but torment it, fury-like; the affection which she excites is not his happiness, but his ruin; physically, she resembles man; she is, like him, formed of clay; but her qualities are widely different from his own; they have only been chosen to infatuate and to dement men. She is not the longed-for partner of life: Jupiter did not send her of his own free determination; she was the chastisement for the daring boldness of man. She did not come to share the happiness of the other sex, but to destroy it at once, and to bring upon earth, in its stead, misery, and grief, and vexation unknown before. Love was thus impossible; the two sexes remained separated and in antagonism; they could not coalesce to "one flesh."

Does, then, the Hebrew narrative resemble the Greek myth? It knows nothing of the revenge of God; it introduces a far higher object as the result of man's aspiration, namely, liberty and intelligence. That Eve was first tempted by the serpent, expresses merely the truth, that woman is more accessible to persuasion than man; that she is more credulous, because, in her, sentiment prevails over reflection, and confiding kindness over rigid discrimination. Eve is not the *cause*, but the *sharer* of the sin; she bears not merely the "indirect image of God"; she participates in man's weakness as in his greatness; she is in all respects his absolute equal. So infinitely are even the profoundest heathen allegories inferior to the Biblical views.—According to the principle above laid down, we must not urge how Eve could be created out of a rib; nor is it of any interest to know, with Targum Jonathan, that it was "the thirteenth rib of the right side"; or, with a modern theologian, that it was the lowest rib, since in this part of the body "the principal organs of the life of the *soul* are situated"; or that, perhaps, the great distance between the last rib and the thigh-bone gave rise to our narrative. Similar notions are found in other oriental tales. The Hindoo law-giver teaches, that Brahman created the founders of the four principal castes from his mouth, his arms, his thigh, and his foot: but, even in this analogy, the Hebrew narrative maintains its superiority; for it is from the body of the *man* that Eve was formed, whilst, in the Hindoo legend, the persons are parts of the body of the *god*. The Greenlanders believed that the first woman was fashioned out of the thumb of man. It is, therefore, absurd to urge, that the delicate body of woman was not formed out of the dust of the earth, but of organic matter already purified; or that the rib points to the heart of man, and his love. The Hebrew historian intended to convey his idea of the intimate relationship between man and woman, and of the sacredness and indissolubility of conjugal life; and he expressed this idea in a form which was familiar to his contemporaries, and which will, at all times, be acknowledged as a beautiful and affecting mode of enforcing a moral truth of the highest social importance.

With glowing colours, Greek and Roman poets describe the boundless felicity of the first and uncorrupted state of mankind; when they attempt to depict the golden age, their imagination takes the highest flight, their hearts seem warmed, and their pathos is the deeper, the greater the contrasts which the misery of their own time furnishes; their descriptions are the echoes of the past, but they also herald the future; they point *backwards*, but they intend to lead *forward*. They teach what man ought to be, by

[1] ii. 18—25.

showing him what he once has been. Every body walked in god-like virtue; laws were unnecessary; man stood under the immediate dominion of the gods; no tribunal nor punishment threatened; crimes were unknown; the towns had neither walls nor mounds; the sound of arms was not heard, and never did war interrupt the universal peace; all enjoyed health and vigour, and sickness paled no cheek; all were happy in their native abodes, and nobody was tempted to trust himself to the treacherous waves in search of a distant home; an eternal spring matured incessantly fragrant flowers on blooming meadows; the earth yielded spontaneously abundant fruits; the labours of agriculture were not required, nor was man compelled or disposed to shed the blood of animals, either for his food or his safety; the simple produce of vegetation, and the pure floods of springs, sufficed for their sustenance; they were unacquainted with effeminating dainties; inventions were yet unnecessary; fire, and houses, and garments, were not known; the earth was the common property of all, and it was not yet marked out with the strict boundaries of individual possession. But this beatitude was lost by contumacy and wantonness; the races degenerated; the gods withdrew to their celestial abodes, and left man to his struggles, his violence, and his wretchedness. Thus the heathen myths abandon him, as an abject being, to the severity of fate. But the Hebrew writer, in destroying his external Eden, arms him with a power to create a new paradise in his heart; and although dooming him to the toil of a slave, he adorns him with the faculties of a God.

The heathen writers place the golden age exclusively in the remote *past*; its happiness is for ever forfeited, for ever irrecoverable; the world grows worse and worse; the sons constantly surpass their fathers in wickedness; till at last the excess of depravity will cause the unavoidable destruction of the race. But the Bible, though acknowledging the evil propensities of man, affords him the hope of regaining virtue and internal peace, by obedience to the precepts which it enjoins; it has furnished the means by which each succeeding generation may excel the former in piety and goodness; till, in the Messianic time, in a happy *future*, the reign of unceasing bliss will unite all mankind, freed at once from the drudgery of labour and the degradation of sin.

II. THE SITE OF PARADISE.

II. 10—14.

Scarcely any part of the habitable globe has remained without the honour of being regarded the happy abode of our first parents. Let us briefly examine the Biblical statements.

Eastward in Eden was a garden, in which man was placed (ver. 8). This garden was watered by a river which came forth from Eden, and which parted itself, in the garden, in four arms: the Pison, the Gihon, the Hiddekel, and the Euphrates. We shall try to ascertain the identity of these streams. But in order to gain a basis for this investigation, we commence with those parts of the description about which no uncertainty exists.

1. The third river is the Hiddekel, the position of which is described in connection with Assyria. Now there is no reasonable ground to doubt that Hiddekel is the *Tigris*. This river has nearly the same name in the Aramaean languages and in Arabic; and signifies a *sharp* or *swift arrow*, which appellation it deserves, on account of the rapidity of its course.

2. The fourth river is simply called Euphrates. It required no further description; it was universally known to the Hebrews. It was called the "great river," or "the river" *par excellence*.

3. The Pison. It is described with greater copiousness than the three other rivers; it was evidently supposed to be as little familiar to the readers as the Euphrates was

well known to them; we can, therefore, not be astonished at the variety of conjectures proposed with regard to it. But the river Pison is further described as encompassing the whole land of Havilah. This country is mentioned as bordering, in the east, towards Assyria, both on the territories of the Ishmaelites, and of the Amalekites. It is enumerated both among the countries of the Cushites, together with provinces on the Arabian Gulf, and among the countries of the Shemitic Joktanites, together with tracts adjoining the Persian Gulf. But in the former statement, nations inhabiting the regions of the Persian, and in the latter, those occupying the provinces near the Arabian Gulf, are intermixed. It follows, therefore, that, in both instances, Havilah designates the same country, extending, at least, from the Persian to the Arabian Gulf, and, on account of its vast extent, easily divided into two distinct parts.

The Pison is, therefore, a river which encircles the territory between the Persian and Arabian Gulf. But there exists no river which takes such a remarkably circuitous course. It is, therefore, natural that many expositors should have resorted to the expedient of taking the word "river" here in a more general signification as *sea*, or more particularly, *the sea-coast*, and to explain Pison as all the floods which wash the shores of the whole of Arabia, from the Persian to the Arabian Gulf. If this interpretation really met the difficulty, it might be readily embraced as sufficiently satisfactory, especially as, on the other hand, the word "sea" is, in Hebrew, not limited to oceans. But it is far from settling the question. For the river Pison must join its floods with those of the Euphrates and Tigris in the garden of Eden itself; it is one of the four arms proceeding from the common great stream; and this cannot be said of the two gulfs encompassing Arabia. We are compelled to insist upon this point; for the author evidently contemplated to furnish an exact geographical description of Eden; he nowhere shows the intention to conceal its real site; he mentions two rivers which were universally known, and whose course could easily be traced; he describes the two others more circumstantially, and alludes to Asshur and Cush, two well-known countries; he gives no partial and national, but a truthful, historical account; he does not, like most of the other ancient writers, proudly place the origin of nations in his own land, but in a far distant eastern region, which, indeed, all repeated researches confirm to have been the birthplace of mankind. We cannot, therefore, be satisfied with some indistinct conception regarding Pison; we are obliged to take it, also, as a river, or an arm of the great stream: this was evidently the meaning of the Hebrew writer. But we delay to decide for one particular river, till we have considered the fourth stream flowing through Eden, namely—

4. The Gihon. It is described "as compassing the whole land of Cush." There can be little doubt with regard to this statement. Cush includes the *southern* countries which came within the geographical knowledge of the Hebrews; it embraces all provinces between Arabia and the Nile, and the desert tracts beyond it, and between the Mediterranean and the most southern regions of Africa, to the farthest border of the earth. The only river which can be said to embrace this whole territorial extent is the Nile. We believe, therefore, that it is impossible to question the identity of the Gihon and the great river of Egypt. And the support which tradition gives to this opinion establishes it almost as a certainty.

But it will be asked, How is it possible to consider the Nile as an arm of the same river which sends forth the Euphrates and the Tigris? They flow in opposite directions, and are separated by seas and mountains. However, here we must again refer to a principle urged in a former part of this volume, namely, that the Israelites did not surpass the other Eastern nations in secular knowledge; they participated in their progress as they shared their errors; they were not more advanced in geography than the extent of their travels, conquests, and researches permitted them to be. If, therefore, it can be proved that these notions, however strange they may appear to us, and

however far they are from truth, were entertained by other ancient nations, we must cease to wonder if we should find them among the Hebrews also. Now it is undoubted, that they were popular even among nations far more zealous in scientific pursuits than the Hebrews, and even in much later times.

It was generally believed that Arabia, India, and the eastern part of Africa, were connected by a continent in such a manner that the great ocean bordering on these countries formed one unbroken plain of waves. It was through that continent that the Indus was thought to take its way to Africa, and to appear there as the Nile. The circumnavigation of Africa under Pharaoh Necho (about B.C. 600), had, indeed, acquainted the Egyptians with the true extent of Africa; but it failed to eradicate a popular belief which seems to have taken too deep a root. When Alexander the Great saw crocodiles in the Indus, and Egyptian peas on the banks of the overflowing river Acesinus, "he thought he had found the origin of the Nile, which he believed to rise in this part of India, and after flowing through vast deserted regions, to lose the name of Indus; for when it reaches again inhabited land, the Ethiopians and Egyptians call it Nile, and thus it falls at last into the Mediterranean Sea." Others maintained, in nearly the same manner, the identity of the Euphrates and the Nile. However curious this opinion of the ancient writers is, it is not much at variance with the assumptions of the Greek authors. The Ionian philosophers believed the earth to be a disc, encircled by the ocean, and bending down towards the south, on account of the weight of the tropical vegetation. The geographical notions prevalent even so late as the fourteenth century of the present era, were so crude, that we find it difficult now to enter into them. On one of the maps published by Vicomte de Santarem, and dating from that time (1370), are represented from north to south successively Media, Troy, Antiochia, Damascus, and Babylonia. The monk Cosmas, the geographer of the church, represented the earth as a plain, in the form of a parallelogram, twice longer than broad, indented with the inland seas, — the Mediterranean, the Caspian, the Red Sea, and the Persian Gulf, — and encompassed by a rectangular trench occupied by the oceans; the heavens are represented as a semi-circular tent, supported by perpendicular walls; beyond the great sea rose a high mountain, behind which the sun was believed to be hidden during the night, and from which it was supposed to emerge again in the morning. And so late as 1486, the clerical council, assembled at Salamanca, denounced the views of Columbus as grossly heterodox; they declared it to be perverse heresy, opposed not only to the doctrines of the Fathers of the Church, but to Scripture itself, to believe that by sailing westwards the eastern parts of the earth could be reached; or that the earth was round, and not flat; or that there were antipodes.

We shall, therefore, not hesitate to ascribe to the Hebrews similar notions. It is true that *we*, with our modern geographical knowledge, must find them very strange; and some scholars, determined at any price to find in the Bible geographical truth also, have known no other remedy than to assert, that the verses describing the four rivers, are a spurious interpolation; that they obviously bear the character "of the surcharge of the gloss or note of a later age, founded upon the fanciful traditions then prevailing with respect to the situation of the ancient Paradise." But it is obvious that such a device, dictated merely by embarrassment and perplexity, is unwarranted as it is objectionable in principle. Even Josephus mentions the Ganges and Nile as arms of the same river; we are indeed compelled, by the explicit statements of our text, to adopt this suggestion; this seems the only method of obtaining the four converging rivers of Eden. We consider, therefore, the Pison as the *Indus*, and the Gihon as the *Nile*. The Indus might, indeed, be said to border the land of Havilah in the east; and if the author describes it as "compassing" this country, he seems to have believed that it bends considerably westward, so as to come within the region of the Euphrates

and the Tigris. In a similar manner the Gihon "compasses" Ethiopia; it embraces a large portion of it, and forms one of its most remarkable features.

And now we may hope to gain a clear and intelligible view of the four rivers of Eden. This favoured abode is evidently represented as the centre of that part of the earth which was destined for the habitation of man. The rivers are everywhere considered as the veins of the land. A country without a river is a dreary and uninhabitable desert. Now Eden, as the centre, sends forth four arms *to the four principal parts of the globe*,—the Indus to the east, the Nile to the south, the Tigris to the north, and the Euphrates to the west. Thus in the Chinese traditions four rivers flow from the mountain Kuen-lun to the four quarters of the world; and in the sacred books of the Persians, the fountain Anduisur, which rises in the holy mountain Albordsh, is said to diffuse its waters over the whole earth by many canals. The very countries with which the rivers of Paradise have been connected in the Biblical description, represent distinctly the different regions of the earth; for Havilah is, in the Old Testament, regarded as comprising the remotest lands in the east, Cush, those in the south, and Assyria is contantly the northern land. Thus Eden remains no isolated spot; it sends forth its fertilising floods to all parts of the earth; it is the very heart of the globe, and spreads refreshing life over its surface.

But Eden is also described as the cradle of *mankind*, as the birthplace of the human families. Here the first men enjoyed their happy, though brief, existence of childlike innocence. They were expelled eastward. But we find the first patriarch of the Hebrews again in the land between the Euphrates and Tigris. From here he emigrates into the land of Canaan; and when his descendants recall to their memory the history of their pious ancestor, the founder of their enlightened faith, they find it connected with the same rivers which form an essential feature in the scenery of the primary abodes of man.

Eden comprised that tract of land where the Euphrates and Tigris separate; from that spot the "garden in Eden" cannot be distant. Let it suffice that we know its general position; but we are not permitted to penetrate within, as if the angel with the flaming sword forbade the access.

The Paradise is no exclusive feature of the earliest history of the Hebrews; most of the ancient nations have similar narratives about a happy abode, which care does not approach, and which re-echoes with the sounds of the purest bliss. The Greeks believed, that at an immense distance, beyond the pillars of Hercules, on the borders of the earth, were the islands of the Blessed, the Elysium, abounding in every charm of life, and the garden of the Hesperides, with their golden apples, guarded by an ever-watchful serpent (Ladon). But still more analogous is the legend of the Hindoos, that in the sacred mountain Meru, which is perpetually clothed in the golden rays of the sun, and whose lofty summit reaches into heaven, no sinful man can exist; that it is guarded by dreadful dragons; that it is adorned with many celestial plants and trees, and is watered by four rivers, which thence separate, and flow to the four chief directions. Equally striking is the resemblance to the belief of the Persians, who suppose, that a region of bliss and delight, the town Eriene Vedšho or *Heden*, more beautiful than the whole rest of the world, traversed by a mighty river, was the original abode of the first men before they were tempted by Ahriman, in the shape of a serpent, to partake of the wonderful fruit of the forbidden tree Hom. And the books of the Chinese describe a garden near the gate of heaven where a perpetual zephir breathes; it is irrigated by abundant springs, the noblest of which is the "fountain of life"; and abounds in delightful trees, one of which bears fruits which have the power of preserving and prolonging the existence of man.

These and other analogies warn us not to lay too much stress upon the external detail of the Biblical description of Eden, nor to reduce it to a mere "hieroglyphic,"

copied from, or composed after, an Egyptian picture; it is to be regarded as the form for the embodiment of momentous ideas: let us try to imbibe their refreshing spirit; but let us not cavil about "the letter that killeth."

In the larger edition, the principal remaining opinions proposed about the site of Paradise have been examined.

CHAPTER II. 4 TO III. 24.

SUMMARY.—Some features of another cosmogony are inserted: a mist watered and fructified the surface of the earth (ver. 6); God formed a man from the dust of the ground, and animated him by the breath of life (ver. 7); He placed him in a beautiful garden in Eden, which was traversed by a stream branching into four arms; which abounded in every delightful fruit and herb; and in the midst of which stood two wonderful trees, the tree of knowledge and the tree of life (vers. 8—15). All the vegetable productions of this paradise were allowed to man; the tree of knowledge alone was interdicted to him; and the transgression of this command was threatened with man's forfeiture of a deathless existence, for which he was originally destined (vers. 16, 17). God then created all the animals, and brought them before the man, who gave appropriate names to all (vers. 19, 20). From one of his ribs a woman was formed, whom he accepted as his spouse and help-meet; whence man and wife are united by an inseparable bond (vers. 18, 21—24). Both lived in child-like, unconscious innocence (ver. 25;) but the serpent tempted the woman to eat of the forbidden fruit, assuring her that she would thereby attain the intellect and reason of God. She was persuaded and gave her husband also of the fruit (iii. 1—6). They became at once aware of the state of nature in which they lived; they knew that they were naked; and when they heard the approach of God, they hid themselves in shame (vers. 7, 8). After interrogating them upon the reason of their concealment (vers. 9—13), God pronounced a severe curse against the serpent (vers. 14, 15), the woman (ver. 16), and the man (vers. 17—19), decreeing perpetual enmity between that animal and the human race, degradation of the former, and pain and toil of the latter.—The woman received the significant name of Eve (ver. 20). God Himself provided clothes for the human couple (ver. 21). But lest they should eat of the tree of life also, they were expelled from the garden of Eden; and cherubs, with flaming swords, were placed at its entrance, to guard the access to that marvellous tree (vers. 22—24).

4. These *are* the generations of the heaven and of the earth when they were created. In the day when the Lord God made earth and heaven: 5. No plant of the field was yet on the earth, and no herb of the field did

4—6. The end of the following narrative is the fall of man, the origin of sin and of misery; the author approaches, therefore, this subject directly, without circuitous additions: nothing is superfluous, nothing idle embellishment. The fall of man is occasioned by the fruit of the tree of knowledge. It was, therefore, necessary to premise the origin of vegetation. It is produced by a *mist*, which rises from the earth, descends in the shape of rain (ver. 5), and waters the whole ground (ver. 6). According to the Lamaic (a Buddhist) creed, golden clouds sent down, in primeval time, an immense quantity of water, which increased to a mighty sea; a foam appeared on it in the course of centuries, and from this foam, man and all living creatures came forth; and from man came the gods

yet sprout forth: for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, nor *was there* a man to till the ground. 6. And there rose a mist from the earth, and watered the whole surface of the ground. 7. And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and

Thus the earth, and the beings that people it, existed before the gods; the universe is but the result of chance; not moral but physical laws were the creating agencies.

The name of God was, in the preceding section, invariably *Elohim*; in this part it is almost as constantly *Jehovah Elohim*. This combination seems to imply that *Jehovah* is the *Elohim* who created the world; that both words designate the same Being; and although they express different attributes of His nature, He is one, and the only framer of the universe. Thus the compound term *Jehovah Elohim* is far from indicating a spirit antagonistic to that of the first chapter; on the contrary, it confirms and strengthens it; it removes the possible misconception, that not *Jehovah*, as the God of Israel (Exod. vi. 3), but the universal Lord, *Elohim*, has produced the world. By the use of the name *Jehovah*, the narrative advances a very important step towards the peculiar theocratical character of the Pentateuch; but by combining it with *Elohim*, it reminds, also, of the Omnipotent Creator. The God of the Universe is the God of Israel; but the God of Israel is, at the same time, Governor of the whole world. In the first chapter, the mere external act of the creation of man was narrated; it was, therefore, sufficient to designate God as the all-powerful Being, as the God of gods, or Elohim; but the following section describes an internal change in the heart of man; it delineates how sin took the place of innocence, and how misery succeeded happiness; it was, therefore, desirable to introduce God by a name, which implies holiness, which, by its mysterious signification, awes the heart, but which yet shows this Being as the Creator, and therefore *Jehovah Elohim* was employed. That this was really the idea of the Hebrew writer is evident from the striking fact that in the whole conversation with the serpent, not *Jehovah Elohim*, but simply *Elohim*, is used (iii. 1—5); it would have been a profanation to put the holy name of God in the tempter's mouth, or to pronounce it before his ears. Thus the identity of *Elohim* and *Jehovah* having once been impressed, it was not necessary to repeat this composition later, except on peculiar occasions. Wherever it is subsequently employed, it adds pathos and emphasis to the ideas; but the nature of this emphasis is always coloured by the context in which it occurs; it is not necessarily the same as that obvious in this our passage.

7. The earth filled itself, by spontaneous growth, with herbs and trees; a fertilising rain supported the productive strength of the virgin soil; and the surface of the globe stood adorned by the benignant care of the Creator. But all this luxuriance of vegetation was not destined to bloom merely as a gay ornament; it was ordained to serve the purposes of a higher being; and though the animals might always find in abundance the freely-growing herbs, which sufficed for their food, their future rulers were to owe their subsistence to their own exertion; they were intended to "till the ground." It was, then, the will of God, that His representatives on earth should learn early the dignity of work; they should imitate Him in His unceasing activity also; unlike the golden age of the heathens, the state of Paradise, even, should be exalted by the energy of labour; the Eden, even, should be guarded and cultivated by man (ver. 15): the genius of nations is mirrored in their gods; the deities of the Olympus are "living without duty and care"; but the God of Israel "does not sleep and does not slumber." In this zeal

breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.—8. And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden eastward; and there He placed the man whom He had formed. 9. And the Lord God caused to grow out of the ground every tree that is pleasant to the sight and

man might still resemble Him; but God "does not weary, and is not fatigued"; this great privilege was forfeited by man through his fall; he was doomed thenceforth to "eat his bread in the sweat of his brow" (iii. 19).

Thus God formed *man* of the dust of the *earth*. Though bearing the seal of the Most High, he is like "a transitory shadow," like a "vessel in the potter's hand." He might harbour a noble pride, but he must temper it with fear and humility; a consciousness of his Divine origin might fill him with lofty aspirations, but the recollection of his frailty must teach him lowly resignation to a higher will; he might sow for eternity, but he must be prepared to leave the harvest to other reapers. He combines earth and heaven, mind and matter, animal and Divine life, nothingness and infinity. And the great reconciler of all these conflicting antagonisms is God, who has framed the body in the darkness of the earth, but granted the soul from the spheres of eternal light. The origin of man from the earth is a notion extensively adopted; it was prevalent not only among the Greeks and Romans, but among the Peruvians, who believed that the world was peopled by four men and four women; and that whilst the soul is immortal, the body consists of clay, "because it becomes again earth;" among the Collas, the Carribbees, and the North American Indians, who maintain that man lived long in the interior of the earth, till an egress to the surface was discovered, where they were tempted to remain by the abundance of excellent game. It was familiar to the ancient Egyptians, who considered man to have been formed from the slime of the Nile; to the Hindoos, who think the human body either composed of five elements, or consisting of earth alone; to the Chinese, who believe that man was shaped from yellow clay; and to several other ancient tribes. Others derive the origin of man as confidently from the water (as the Lamas), or from a mixture of earth and blood (as the Chaldeans); whilst the Persians are convinced that a certain tree (Reivas), produced by the seed of the man-bull Kaiomorts, was animated by Ormuzd, and transformed into the first human pair: and few nations only avow their ignorance with regard to this mysterious question (comp. notes on i. 24—31).

In the classical writings we find many analogous passages regarding the nature of man. Euripides says: "The body returns to the earth, from whence it was framed, and the spirit ascends to the ether"; and still more distinctly Lucretius: "The earth is justly called our mother: that which first arose from the earth, returns back into the earth; and that which was sent down from the regions of the sky, the regions of the sky again receive when carried back to them." Similar sentiments are found in other Greek and Roman authors.

8, 9. The first man was placed in Eden, in order to enjoy undisturbed peace and felicity. A description of this happy abode was therefore necessary. It abounded in every production which delights the senses; ornament and utility were equally provided for; but in the midst of it, and forming its very heart, were two wonderful trees, bearing more precious fruit than the rest; they did not afford a merely momentary enjoyment; their effects were as lasting as they were miraculous; the one secured eternal life; the other roused the slumbering intellect; it taught reason to reflect; and enabled the judgment to distinguish between moral good and moral evil. Man was then still

good for food, and the tree of life in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. 10. And a river goeth out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it parteth itself, and becometh to four arms. 11. The name of the first *is* Pison: that *is* it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where *there is* the gold; 12. And the gold of that land *is* good: there *is* the bdellium and the onyx stone. 13. And the name of

undiscerning, and, therefore, irresponsible and guiltless; he was in the state of harmless childhood; he was not yet called upon "to reject the evil and to choose the good," or to pursue, with self-conscious energy, the way of virtue and glory. The "knowledge of good and evil" does not, therefore, merely apply to the external senses, nor to the perception of decorum in dress and manners; it includes all the nobler faculties of man, which distinguish him, and permit him to claim relationship with the Creator Himself. And around these trees centres the interest of our narrative. The tree of life has analogies in the "king of trees," *Hôm* (or Gokenen), which the Persians believed to grow at the spring Arduisur, issuing from the throne of Ormuzd; and in the tall *Kalpaurksham* (or pilpel) of the Indians, to which was also ascribed the power of securing immortality, and every other blessing. But the tree of knowledge may be compared with the well of wisdom in northern mythology, from which even the great god Odin drinks, and which gives knowledge even to the wise Mimer.

The garden was planted *in the east*, in the region of light, where the sun sends his first and purest rays; in that region with which the notions of joy and splendour were naturally associated.

10—14. The Eden is geographically described in a manner which leaves no doubt, that a distinct locality was before the mind of the author, and which enables us to fix its general position with some probability. A river went out of Eden to water the garden; it is by no means said to have had its source there; it branched out "from thence," that is, evidently, from the garden, or, at least, from Eden, in those four streams which were chiefly important to the Israelites. In the same manner, the Persians traced the origin of all the streams of the earth to the fountain Ardechsur.

This principal river divided into four *heads*, that is, *arms*; for, after the *parting* only, the stream can be said to send forth arms.

The *four* rivers diverge to the four parts of the earth, embellishing and fructifying the countries. Beyond this obvious sense, we must not seek any hidden symbolical meaning in the number four; for instance, as typifying proportion and order; or the four cardinal virtues; or prophetically foreshadowing the four great monarchies (Daniel vii.).

The first arm, Pison, traversed the land of Havilah, which is distinguished by three productions: 1. *Gold*, which is described as *good*, that is, *pure*.—2. *Bedolah*, which is, probably, *bdellium*, the gum of a tree growing in Arabia, India, and Babylon, whitish, resinous, and pellucid, and nearly the colour of frankincense; when broken it appears the colour of wax, with grains like frankincense, but larger.—The third production was the *onyx-stone*, about which we refer to our Commentary on Exodus, p. 409.

It might be supposed, that the four rivers which proceeded from Eden, and then fertilized the principal parts of the whole earth, were distinguished by their extraordinary qualities; and this is, indeed the case. The Indus was famous as the holy river of some of the mightiest and

the second river *is* Gihon: that *is* it which compasseth the whole land of Cush. 14. And the name of the third river *is* Hiddekel: that *is* it which floweth before Assyria. And the fourth river, that *is* Euphrates.—15. And the Lord God took the man, and brought him into the garden of Eden to till it and to guard it. 16. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: 17. But of the tree of

most ancient nations; the Tigris was remarkable for its uncommon swiftness; and the Nile and Euphrates for the sweetness and excellence of their water.

15. Eden was prepared for the reception of man; its locality has, by way of parenthesis, been described; the text returns now to a former statement (ver. 8), and repeats, that Paradise was assigned to man as his delightful abode; but it adds significantly, that it became the duty of man "to cultivate and to guard it"; he should not only protect it against the inroads of the animals which were to be created, but maintain, by his own labour, its primitive beauty; thus only would the fruits remain delightful to his sight, and refreshing to his taste (ver. 9). But we do not see in these words any resemblance to the Persian myth, that Ormuzd commanded the first man to guard the Paradise against the power of the evil genius which had penetrated into the world, especially against snow, and frost, and sterility. How could man prevent this? If *Ormuzd* is powerless against Ahriman, how should *a mortal* prevail? But no such warfare was necessary. The universe had just been finished, and declared perfect.—The Hebrew writer manifests his genius often by using and modifying the common eastern traditions,—but much more frequently by rejecting them, where they would either fail to enhance, or where they would destroy, the purity of his conceptions.

16, 17. The important command which occasions the catastrophe in the history of man is given; all the trees of Paradise are dedicated to his enjoyment; the tree of knowledge alone is forbidden; and a participation of its fruits is threatened with death. Adam was originally designed by God for perpetual life; he was destined for unceasing happiness in childlike simplicity; but he should not, like God, combine eternal life with discerning wisdom; it was so ordained, not from any motive of envy on the part of the Deity, but for his own felicity. Though he was, therefore, permitted to eat of the tree of life, he was severely forbidden to taste of the fruits of the tree of knowledge. But he was disobedient; he acquired the Divine intelligence by tasting of the former (iii. 22); and he thus called death upon himself; and, lest he should eat again of the latter, and thus counteract and frustrate the Divine punishment, he was excluded from the garden where it grew; for, after his disobedience, any *previous* participation of the tree of life, was without effect. This is evidently the train of thought delineated in the Biblical narrative. The historian was deeply engaged with the problem why death was necessary in the human race; why God impresses man with His own image, if He so soon destroys him. This question was especially important to the Israelite, who so eminently valued a long life in the land which the Lord had promised. Many later writers, indeed, found death a jarring discord in the universal harmony; and if they regarded the world as perfect, they did not forget to point to death as the only great and awful evil. The Hebrew writer intended to solve this problem; and he teaches us, that this discord was not designed by God, that this evil was not intended by the benign Cre-

the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for when thou eatest thereof thou must surely die.— 18. And the Lord God said, *It is* not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him. 19. And the Lord God formed out of the ground every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought

ator; it was man alone "by whose sin Death entered the world"; it was his disobedience which destroyed the beautiful harmony that originally pervaded the creation. But God is loving even while He chastises. Man lost a great boon by his levity, but God granted him a greater gift in its stead; He bestowed upon him that intelligence which raises him to the dignity of the self-conscious master of the earth. Man forfeited the easy material existence of Paradise; but he attained in its place a spiritual life which breaks through all earthly limits; which conquers time, and reaches with its thoughts and its deeds to the gates of eternity.—It has frequently been asserted, that the Pentateuch never alludes to the question of immortality. It treats it, in its innermost bearings, at the very beginning of Genesis.

18—20. The writer's end is the history of man's fall; the serpent occasions, the wife shares it; it is, therefore, necessary to introduce the creation of the animals, and of woman. This is done in a manner which touches a deep chord in the nature of man, his sociable disposition; he feels the necessity of bestowing and receiving affection; his heart requires feeling beings to respond to his emotions, and his intellect demands minds by the contact with which the spark of thought may be kindled: "it is not good that man should be alone." God determined, therefore, to furnish him "a help at his side." He, accordingly, created first the animals, all the beasts of the field, and the birds of the air. They were, indeed, "a help" to man. They enlivened his solitude; they increased his happiness by showing their susceptibility to the bounties of nature spread around them; and as no enmity existed yet among their tribes; as they did not yet prey upon each other, and the herb of the field sufficed for their food: they did not disturb the universal peace which pervaded the creation, nor did they force man to a sanguinary self-defence. The general clemency, we may say sympathy, with which the animals are provided for in the Pentateuch, removes every surprise at the close relation which they are here made to occupy with regard to man; and this will appear the more appropriate, if we consider that the man of Paradise, with his intellect yet unawakened, and uncontrolled instinct as his safe but only guide, stood, indeed, much nearer to the general animal kingdom; the creation of man and of the beasts is narrated in exactly the same terms; both are "formed out of earth" (ver. 7, and ver. 19); and both have "the breath of life" (vi. 7; vii. 22): though bearing the seal and image of God, man was unconscious of his superiority.

But a greater proximity between man and animals must not be sought; we must not find here a perfect equality of both; the tenour of our text is far from coinciding with the belief of the Mohammedans, that all creatures have immortal souls, and participate in the resurrection; or with that of the Hindoos, that all souls come from Brahman; or of the Buddhists, that every breath of life is indestructible; or of the Egyptians, that the soul of no animal is lost, but enters the body of another creature; or of the North American Indians, that in the other world all souls will meet, but with the same distinctions under which they existed on earth. All this is against the spirit of the Old Testament; such notions are the result of morbid speculations; and they are in the Book of Ecclesiastes passingly

them to the man to see how he would call them: and whatsoever the man called every living creature, that *was* its name. 20. And the man gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for the man he did not find a help meet for himself.— 21. And the Lord God caused a sleep to fall upon the

alluded to, only in order to be distinctly and emphatically denied (iii. 20, 21; xii. 8).

Man was certainly the superior master of nature. This is evident from the next feature which our text mentions. God brought the animals which He had created to man, to "see what he would call them"; and the names chosen by man were to remain to them for ever. This is the first act by which man exercised his sovereignty; and although his intellect was not yet roused, he was sufficiently endowed for that task; for he had been capable of understanding the Divine command and of representing to himself death. In the first cosmogony, God Himself fixed the names of the objects which He had called into existence; He determined the appellations of Day and Night, of Heaven, and Sea, and Dry Land. Here He cedes this right to man, whom He has ordained "to have dominion over all the earth." The name was, according to Hebrew and Eastern writers in general, an integral part of the object itself; it was not deemed indifferent; it was no conventional sign; it was an essential attribute. When God revealed Himself to Moses in the burning bush, the latter hastened to enquire under what name He wished to be announced to the Israelites. When a crisis in the life of an individual was imminent, or had been successfully overcome, his name was changed into another one expressive of that event. Kings, at their elevation to the throne, assumed another name. To "know the name of God" was identical with knowing His internal nature, and even with piously walking in His precepts. The right, therefore, of determining the names includes authority and dominion; but man did not perform this act of his own accord; he did not yet feel his exalted rank; but God, by inviting him to perform it, made him govern over the works of His hands, and placed all under his feet (Ps. viii. 7). It has been frequently observed, that our text explains the origin of language, and attributes its invention solely to man. Language is, indeed, a spontaneous emanation of the human mind; it is implanted in its nature; in furnishing man, besides his external organisation, with reason and imagination, God bestowed upon him the principal elements for communication by speech; it is as natural a function of his intellect as reflection; intelligent speech is one of the chief characteristics of man; hence the ancient Greek poets call men simply the "speech-gifted"; the germ was bestowed by God; man had to do no more than to cultivate it. But our author does not enter upon this abstruse question at all; it is of no practical importance for religious truth; it must have appeared superfluous to one who knows God as the Creator and Framer of all, as the Bestower of every gift, as Him who "hath made man's mouth, and who maketh dumb" (Exod. iv. 11).—Pythagoras, and other ancient philosophers, justly considered the invention of names for objects an act of the highest human wisdom; and the Chinese ascribed it to their first and most honoured sovereign Fo-hi, who performed this task so well, that "by naming the things their very nature was made known."

21—24. As the names are not given at random, but are chosen with careful regard to the nature of the objects, Adam was led to examine the animals congregated around him; he felt them, indeed, in some respects kindred to himself, as "living creatures" (ver. 19); they were, in certain regards, a help to him,

man, and he slept: and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place; 22. And the Lord God formed the rib, which He had taken from the man, into a woman, and brought her to the man. 23. And the man said, This time *it is* bone of my bones, and flesh of my

but not such a help as is meet for *man* (ver. 20), for a *human* soul—a help which satisfies the longing heart and calms the craving mind. And God created woman. We have above pointed out the extreme beauty of the following narrative, and have alluded to the sublime truths which it implies regarding the dignity of woman and the sacredness of matrimony. Strong and mighty indeed must that tie be, for whose sake man resigns all the fond associations of childhood; fervent must that love be which gains the ascendancy over the affection for father and mother. If the parents consider the son as the gift of God (Ps. cxxvii. 3), the son receives his wife as a special Divine gift (ver. 22). Many parents love their children more than all the world; the youth lavishes the whole wealth of his affections on her who sways his heart. The highest ideas of love, which are generally represented as the exclusive result of modern civilisation, are plainly expressed in the affecting narration of these two verses; they are not obscurely or vaguely hinted at; the Hebrew writer unfolds them with an emphasis which shows his earnestness, his decision. Greek and Roman philosophers have invented many a myth, to explain the origin of conjugal life. But woman occupies in those tales generally either an invidious or a despicable position (see p. 65). There is one, however, which assigns to her a less inferior rank, but which is, on the other hand, so grotesque and extravagant, that it embodies no useful lesson, and is, practically, of very subordinate value. Aristophanes says, in the Banquet of Plato, that there existed originally a class of human beings, the offspring of the moon, who were at the same time male and female. These "men-women" had four hands and legs, and two faces upon a circular neck. But they were terrible in strength, and made an attempt against the gods. To weaken and to punish them, Jupiter divided them into two human beings, walking upon two legs, with the menace, that if they would still behave licentiously, he would again divide them, "so that they should go upon one leg, hopping," and "with their noses split down." Since this time, each half seeks with desire the other part of itself, and both long to grow again together; and if they see each other, they are struck with a wondrous kind of friendship, and are unwilling ever to be separated. And the cause is not sensual pleasure; "but the soul of each is evidently desirous of something else, which it is unable to tell." —We have omitted many frivolous features interspersed in this theory of Aristophanes; and its only point of contact with the Biblical narrative is the longing "to become one flesh."

25. One bold stroke is sufficient for a master-hand to stamp a character upon a picture. The state of childlike, unconscious innocence was to be described. It is a wide and great subject. The artistic genius of our author fully fixes it by the one remark, "that man and his wife were naked, and were not ashamed." They were still true children of nature. Sin was unknown to them; therefore they required no precaution to keep it afar. Passion did not attack their hearts; they needed, therefore, no arms to oppose and to crush it. Good and evil were notions not yet clearly defined; the strife of conflicting emotions and thoughts had not yet commenced; they inhabited the Paradise, "clothed in their innocence alone." Instinct followed its own concordant laws; and shame, the daughter of nicely-discriminating conscience, slumbered in the vacant mind. Diodorus Sicilus and Plato also mention nakedness as a feature of

flesh: SHE shall be called Woman, because SHE was taken out of Man. 24. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cling to his wife: and they shall become one flesh.—25. And they were both naked, the man and his wife; and they were not ashamed.

the golden age. But it is, in itself, no sign of innocence; many savage nations have retained that custom to periods when the purity of manners had long passed away; they see no impropriety in nakedness; the maidens of Biasso and the Caribbees, the inhabitants of the coast of Guinea, and many races in the Indian Archipelago, despise clothes, as the Peruvians did before the time of Manco Capac. It is only in times when clothes have become customary, that nakedness and shame are coupled.

CHAPTER III.

1. Now the serpent was subtle, more than any beast of

1. Almost throughout the East, the serpent was used as an emblem of the evil principle, of the spirit of disobedience and contumacy. A few exceptions only can be discovered. The Phœnicians adored that animal as a beneficent genius; and the Chinese consider it as a symbol of superior wisdom and power, and ascribe to the kings of heaven (*tien-hoangs*) bodies of serpents. Some other nations fluctuated in their conceptions regarding the serpent. The Egyptians represented the eternal spirit Kneph, the author of all good, under the mythic form of that reptile; they understood the art of taming it, and embalmed it after death; but they applied the same symbol for the god of revenge and punishment (Tithrambo), and for Typhon, the author of all moral and physical evil; and in the Egyptian symbolical alphabet the serpent represents subtlety and cunning, lust and sensual pleasure. In Greek mythology, it is certainly, on the one hand, the attribute of Ceres, of Mercury, and of Æsculapius, in their most beneficent qualities; but it forms, on the other hand, a part of the terrible Furies or Eumenides: it appears, in the form of Python, as a fearful monster, which the arrows of a god only were able to destroy; and it is the most hideous and most formidable part of the impious giants who despise and blaspheme the power of heaven. The Indians, like the savage tribes of Africa and America, suffer and nourish, indeed, serpents in their temples, and even in their houses; they believe that they bring happiness to the places which they inhabit; they worship them as the symbols of eternity; but they regard them also as evil genii, or as the inimical powers of nature which is gradually depraved by them, as the enemies of the gods, who either tear them to pieces, or tread their venomous head under their all-conquering feet. So contradictory is all animal worship." Its principle is, in some instances, gratitude, and in others fear; but if a noxious animal is very dangerous, the fear may manifest itself in two ways, either by the resolute desire of extirpating the beast, or by the wish of averting the conflict with its superior power: thus the same fear may, on the one hand, cause fierce enmity, and, on the other, submission and worship. Further, the animals may be considered either as the creatures of the powers of nature, or as the productions of a Divine will; and those religious systems, therefore, which acknowledge a dualism, either in nature or in the Deity, or which

the field which the Lord God had made. And it said to the woman: Hath indeed God said, You shall not eat of any tree of the garden? 2 And the woman said to the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: 3. But of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God hath said, You shall not eat of it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die. 4. And the ser-

admit the antagonism between God and nature, must almost unavoidably regard the same animals now as objects of horror, and now of veneration. From all these aberrations, Mosaism was preserved by its fundamental principle of the one and indivisible God, in whose hands is nature with all its hosts, and to whose wise and good purposes all creatures are subservient.

Now in the heathen religions, the demon, represented by the serpent, was universally considered to possess power independent of, and inimical to, the might of the highest god; temples were erected, and sacrifices offered, in his honour. But, in the Biblical narrative, the serpent is no embodiment of an evil genius; it is no more than a noxious reptile which is the *curse* of man, and upon which the execration of God seems to rest. To explain the deadly enmity between man and serpent, and to account for the wretched existence of the venomous reptile, this is an *accessory* end of this episode. The burning colours of the serpent; the cloven, vibrating tongue; the poison-swollen teeth; the horrid hissing; the stealthy and tortuous, but dart-like motions; the irascible temper; the contemptible craft; and frequently the bewitching power of the ever-watchful eyes, make this animal an object of horror and disgust. It was deemed necessary to show that God did not originally produce such a monstrous creature; He could not have pronounced a world perfect which was infested by such a hideous object; nor could He have appointed man the ruler of the earth, if it bred, in secret ambushes, beasts, which it was difficult for him to avoid, and almost impossible to subdue. But that tendency is clearly subordinate to the far more momentous change in the nature of man; the serpent seems, in fact, only introduced to correct the then too prevalent superstition of "an evil spirit"; the narrative teaches that the serpent, whatever might be its pretensions, stands in the power of God, and resistlessly obeys His will; it avails itself of the very prejudice in order to eradicate it. The serpent speaks, because Ahriman, appearing under its form, has the power of language; but yet this serpent is not Ahriman; it is the voice of seduction in the heart of man; it has the malignant propensity of Ahriman, but not his power; the human heart combats against its own happiness, but opposes God only in so far as it destroys the felicity for which He designed man; it acts against God by forgetfulness or by self-illusion, but it does not defy Him; it does not aspire to dispute with Him the supreme government; it considers evil deeds not as triumphs, but as a degradation full of shame and disgrace.

The serpent has thus, indeed, a double purport in our context: it appears first as the tempter, because he was generally supposed to assume that shape; but it is, in reality, only a miserable animal which God has cursed with the hatred of man. In the first characteristic, our narrative leans to the general Oriental tradition; in the second, it is the original conception of the Hebrew writer; and the point where both diverge is the absolute sovereignty with which God pronounces the malediction on the serpent (ver. 14). This animal may entertain an *external* enmity towards man (ver. 15); but it has no power over his heart, because it is nothing but the most abject of all the animals of the desert. It might venture upon war with the

pent said to the woman, Surely you will not die: 5. For God knoweth that when you eat thereof, then your eyes will be opened, and you will be as God, knowing good and evil. 6. And when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, and that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to behold, she took of its fruit, and ate, and gave also to her husband with her; and he

human families; but it cannot dare to oppose God any more than the lowest and feeblest of His creatures (see note on vers. 14, 15).

The serpent is not only malicious, but, like every tempter, astute, cunning, and bland. It addresses the woman, because she is more easily persuaded; it does not abruptly introduce the object of seduction, but approaches it by an archly devised circuit; it puts, in fact, the question so shrewdly, that the woman is the first who mentions the tree of knowledge; and it is thus enabled to proceed securely with the work of mischief.

2—6. For, the seduction does not come from without; it has its first source in the human heart. A will entirely and strongly imbued with virtue, is inaccessible to the darts of temptation. The tenth commandment forbids covetousness; thus, the Decalogue concludes with seizing and destroying the sin as it arises in the desireful bosom. The evil thought is the parent of the evil deed. But the pure heart is free from sinful thoughts. This purity began to vanish from the breast of the first pair. A lurking desire to disobey the Divine command was awakened; and a conversation with the serpent commenced. An internal voice, at first gentle and timid, argued about the justice of the prohibition;—this is the question of the serpent, throwing a significant light upon the previous coloured and partial statement of Eve. Now, the first step was done; and the following stages of the sin are more rapid, and more daring. The answer of the woman bears a certain vehement character; it is exaggerated; it contains the untruth, that God had forbidden even to touch the fruit of the tree of life;—this is the fanaticism of passion and its self-deception; it revolts against the laws and restrictions; it considers them as capricious, conventional fetters, which it is meritorious and noble to break. It is left uncertain whether this untruth was the fault of the woman, or of Adam, who may have reported the command so incorrectly But it certainly furnishes the serpent with the desired weapon to wield the last stroke; the unreasonable interdiction not to *touch* the wonderful fruits, makes the whimsical tyranny of the whole injunction manifest the woman is not bound to bow to so arbitrary a behest; the less so as, in fact, that fruit does not bring death, but God-like knowledge and wisdom;—this is the sophistry of sin; the infatuated intellect matures the fatal plants which shoot forth from the deluded heart; the selfishness of the motives which dictated the prohibition seems evident; envy and jealousy deserve no respect. The sin is committed; and as if afraid to bear alone its dire consequences, the sinner induces others to the same transgression: "Eve gave also to her husband with her; and he did eat." The history of the first sin describes the nature of all human failings in every succeeding age. The simple narrative embodies truths which neither philosophy nor experience have been able to modify or to enlarge.

The text itself explains the words "your eyes will be opened" (ver. 5), by the addition: "and you will be as God, knowing good and evil"; they refer, therefore, not to a mere external sense of decorum; they point to the opening of the mind's eye, to the discernment of what is morally eligible and despicable, and to the judgment which considers and argues.—The woman saw, that the forbidden tree great-

ate.—7. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they *were* naked; and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves girdles.—8. And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. 9. And the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, Where *art* thou? 10. And he said, I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I *am*

ly resembled, in its external appearance, all the other trees of the garden; it was, like them, beautiful and inviting to the sight, and promised to be as pleasant to the taste; it "was a delight to the eyes, and desirable to behold."

7. The mysterious fruit had been tasted: the Rubicon in the lives of the first pair had been passed. The time was gone when "both were naked, and were not ashamed" (ii. 25); their eyes were opened, and "*they knew* that they were naked." They were no more one with nature. They felt the necessity of supplying, by art, a want which they had not known before; and "they sewed fig-leaves together." A feeling of shame came over them. They avoided the presence of God at first not so much from compunction of conscience, as from a keen sense of decency (ver. 10). Though they had made themselves girdles, their feeling of shame was not conquered; they still considered themselves as naked (ver. 10); they were frightened, and concealed themselves at the approach of God. Perfect garments only appeared to suffice them (ver. 21). So entirely had they at once passed from the state of nature to the state of conventionalism: and quite as suddenly, the transition from boyhood to manhood takes usually place in every individual man. But although this bashfulness happened to be the *first* result of their newly acquired judgment, it was neither its only, nor its most important manifestation. The power of distinguishing between good and evil applies to the whole moral and intellectual world; it is the faculty which, more than any other, impresses upon man the resemblance to God. Therefore, the first pair could not long remain unconscious of their disobedience; they must soon feel, that they had acted against the express will of their beneficent Creator; that they had rebelled against His authority; and had repaid ingratitude for goodness and love. Therefore, the blush of guilt soon mingled with that of bashfulness, and the worm of remorse gnawed at the precocious fruit of knowledge. The question of God (in the eleventh verse) marks the transition from mere shame to consciousness of guilt.—To appear in a state of nudity in the temple was strictly forbidden, and many measures of precaution were taken to prevent it; the construction of the altars, and the nature of the priestly garments were regulated after this consideration; and heathen nations observed the same customs of decency.

8—13. God was in familiar intercourse with man in the happy days of his innocence. He was loved like a father; fear was unknown; the severe rule, "nobody beholds God and lives," did not yet exist. As man was scarcely aware of his superiority over the animal creation, so he was hardly impressed with that awe of God which the consciousness of His grandeur inspires. His eyes were not yet opened. He knew neither pride nor humility. He walked in simplicity, careless, but sure of the right path. But now he was awakened to a sense of duty. He cannot bear the presence of God; it overwhelms his spirit. He hears His step; he hides himself; he answers timidly to

naked; and I hid myself. 11. And He said, Who told thee that thou *art* naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? 12. And the man said, The woman whom Thou gavest *to be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate. 13. And the Lord God said to the woman, What is this *that* thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I ate.—14. And the Lord God said to the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou *shalt be*

the question of God; he fears His anger; he tries to avert it, by laying the fault partly upon his wife, and partly *upon God Himself:* "The woman whom Thou gavest *to be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat"; and Eve, not less terrified, accuses the serpent as the cause of the transgression. The voice of conscience troubled for the first time the internal peace. The harmony of the mind was disturbed.—We abstain from developing the many and important practical truths contained in this narrative; we cannot wonder that many have here abandoned themselves to the strains of the preacher; it is, indeed, tempting to pursue the inimitable and unparalleled description of the consequences of sin, the uneasiness and timidity, the cowardice, the internal wretchedness which, as a last resource, impeaches even God as the primary cause of the offence. It is sufficient for us to have indicated the general course of ideas which our section suggests, and to have pointed out the successive stages of innocence, temptation and conflict, sin, remorse, and punishment, which are represented by the Paradise, the serpent, the forbidden fruit, the concealment, and the curse.—We remark, therefore, but briefly, that "the voice of God walking in the garden" is His foot-step (as in 1 Ki. xiv. 6), not His thunder (Ps. xxix. 3—5), nor the whispering voice which indicates His presence (1 Ki. xix. 12); and that the "wind of the day" is the breeze which, in the East, generally refreshes the evening air, and invites the inhabitants to the walks, or the places of public meeting (xix. 1); it describes, therefore, the hours towards the evening, as "the heat of the day" designates the time of noon. Those only who wish to kill the spirit by insisting upon the letter, will take offence at these familiar expressions with which the Deity is here mentioned, and will toil to spiritualise and symbolise them. This "sounding footstep of God" reminds us, perhaps, more strongly than any other part of our narrative, that the form and contents, language and thought, must be carefully and distinctly separated.

14, 15. All expressions conspire to prove, that the serpent is the reptile, not an evil demon that had assumed its shape; it is cursed "of all the cattle, and of all the beasts of the field"; it "goes upon the belly," "eats dust," and "bruises the heels" of man. We have already alluded to this characteristic difference between the Mosaic and the other Eastern narratives on the fall of man (see on ver. 1). If the serpent represented Satan, it would be extremely surprising that the former only was cursed; and that the latter is not even mentioned in this chastising judgment of God. It would, indeed, be entirely at variance with the Divine justice, for ever to curse the animal whose shape it had pleased the evil one to assume. But it is most remarkable to add, that *later Hebrew* writers also speak of this serpent as the *Satan;* thus we read, in the Wisdom of Solomon (ii. 23, 24): "For God has created man for imperishable existence, and made Him after the image of His own being. But by the envy of Satan death came into the world; and it befalls

cursed among all cattle, and among every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: 15. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and

all those who belong to him." Satan is frequently called "the first serpent"; the Samaritan text reads here *liar* instead of *serpent*; and the same notion occurs repeatedly in the New Testament (so distinctly in John viii. 44; Revel. xii. 9; xx. 2), and in later Jewish writings. Thus, while the common oriental tradition concerning the tempter was designedly abandoned in the Pentateuch, it was resumed in later times, and seems to have passed into a general belief. But this apparently strange fact offers no real difficulty; it involves no retrogressive step in the religious notions. The Satan of the later Biblical and apocryphal writers is not identical with the Ahriman of the Persians; the latter is frequently, by way of adaptation, designated by the former name; but this proves no internal identity of both. Ahriman is the enemy of a rival god, Ormuzd; Satan is only the tempter of man; the former is the *creator* of evil, the latter merely the embodiment of the evil propensities lurking in the human heart; the former is a deity, the latter only an instrument of the Divine will; from Ahriman proceed all the irregularities in nature; the hurricane, the earthquake, and the fatal comet, the blast which destroys the crops, and the terrible wind which spreads pestilence, are all his creatures; but the God of Israel rules in the hurricane as in the zephyr; He sends famine and plenty, blessing and curse, according to His wisdom; and whatever He sends is the emanation of His love; and "all discord is harmony not understood." Equally striking is the difference between Satan and the evil demons of other Eastern religions. If Satan, therefore, is represented as having caused the fall of man, this is no step towards heathen notions; but is only the embodiment of the former ideas in their natural development. This embodiment would have been dangerous in the earlier times, when the Israelites were still wavering in their faith, when the separation of monotheism from paganism was still weak and recent, and the serpent Satan might have been by many identified with the serpent Ahriman: therefore the Pentateuch did not introduce Satan. But this could not be injurious in periods when paganism had been long and completely extirpated, and when no danger of a relapse into dualistic systems could be apprehended: therefore later writers had no reason to avoid mentioning Satan, whose perfect subordination to the omnipotent will of God was a deep and universal conviction (see Job i. 12; ii. 6).

God announces with rigour the punishment of the serpent, which, by cunning temptation, had roused and instigated man to be disobedient to God (ver. 13). First a general malediction is pronounced: the serpent shall be cursed alone of all the beasts. While the other animals remained in the same state in which they had lived in Paradise, the serpent was doomed to suffer a degradation and wretchedness which should make it a horror and a warning to the whole creation. For three other maledictions are added: the serpent shall go upon the belly, shall eat dust, and shall live in perpetual and deadly enmity with the seed of woman, whose happiness it had just wickedly destroyed. We must, therefore, suppose that our author represented to himself, previous to the curse, a time when the serpent was not affected with those debasing qualities; and the prophets declare that, in the time of the Messiah, when concord will be restored between man and beast, "the *only* food of the serpent will be dust" (Isai. lxv. 25). It was then believed, that in a remote future the nature of the reptile would again be changed, but only in so far as not to

her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise its heel.—16. To the woman He said, I will indeed multiply thy pain and thy conception; in pain shalt thou bring forth children, but thy desire *shall be* to thy hus-

destroy the general peace in nature, and the undisturbed happiness of man; just as *even* the wolf would then no more tear the lamb, and the lion would eat straw like the ox; the beasts of prey would assume a harmless and unsanguinary disposition: but as the serpent was the cause of its own degradation, as it sinned before man, it was deemed but just that it should retain a mark of its humiliation, even after the restoration of the bliss of Paradise. We need, therefore, here not suppose an allusion to the fable of the infernal dragon of the ancient Persians, the impure Asmogh, which was represented with two feet; or to the winged gryph of the Indians, which was used as a sacred emblem.—The great scantiness of food on which the serpents can subsist, gave rise to the belief entertained by many Eastern nations, and referred to in several Biblical allusions, that they eat dust; whilst the Indians believed them to feed upon wind. In many Eastern religions the extirpation of the reptiles, and especially of the serpents, was enjoined as an important duty; among the Persians it was considered as equivalent to the war for Ormuzd, and against Ahriman; and the most sacred festival was consecrated to this "destruction of evil"; the Hindoos celebrated similar great feasts for the same purpose; and in Cashmere solemn sacrifices were offered for the annihilation of the serpents. Thus the open "enmity between man and serpent" recurs in the whole Orient; it is everywhere impressed with a religious character; it bears a hidden symbolical meaning; it is the combat either against the tempter, or against the prince of evil. The propriety of selecting just that reptile for such purpose has been made more manifest by the scientific study of zoology. It is agreed that the organism of the serpents is one of extreme degradation; their bodies are lengthened out by the mere vegetative repetitions of the vertebrae; like the worms, they advance only by the ring-like scutæ of the abdomen, without fore or hinder limbs; though they belong to the latest creatures of the animal kingdom, they represent a decided retrogression in in the scale of beings.

The Chaldee version of the Pentateuch, known under the name of Targum Jonathan, renders the fifteenth verse thus: "And I shall put enmity between thee and between the woman, between thy seed and her seed; and it will be, when the children of the woman observe the commandments of the Law, that they will tread thee on thy head, and when they forsake the commandments of the Law, thou wilt be able to bite them in their heels; but they will be healed, and thou wilt not be healed; and they will, in the days of the Messiah, be able to make a bruise with the heel." The Targum Jerusalem offers a similar paraphrase. In the New Testament this symbolical interpretation is repeatedly given. Christ is the "seed of woman" (Gal. iv. 4); the serpent is the devil, or the sinful works perpetrated through him (1 John iii. 8); in the fulness of time, God sends forth Christ (Gal. iv. 4), "to destroy, by his death, the devil, who had the power of death" (Heb. ii. 14), or "to bruise Satan under the feet" (Rom. xvi. 20).—Our passage is hence called the "first promise," or "protevangelium."

16. As the woman sinned before man, judgment was pronounced over her first. She also suffers a threefold curse: agonising pain in her travail, yet the continued desire to her husband; and subordination under his will and his authority. The two first imprecations, considered in connection, might indeed be called a curse. Why should the woman, after the first sad experience, so eagerly wish to renew

band, and he shall rule over thee.—17. And to the man He said, Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed *be* the ground for thy sake; in pain shalt thou eat *of* it all the

the acute torments of parturition? Nature must have implanted in her a desire stronger than the vehemence of pain. It is this strange arrangement of nature which occupied the reflection of many ancient writers; and our text represents it as the consequence of disobedience, and as a punishment. Sensuality is the beginning of sin, and the increased violence of the passion is its chastisement. —Although, in general, childbirth is, in the East, and especially for women who work much in the open air, considerably easier than in more northern climes, it is frequently most painful, and not seldom fatal, so that a heart-rending cry of despair and anguish is, in Biblical language, compared with the cry of a woman in travail. The third punishment of woman is her subjection under the will of her husband, who shall be "her master," and who shall "rule over her." She had before been his equal, she was a part of him; but she became the cause of his fall; she was, therefore, doomed to obey him, since she had disobeyed God. That this dependence of the woman was, among the Hebrews, never of a degrading or rigorous character, we have attempted more fully to prove in another place (see note on Exod. pp. 279—281). But exactly the same notions are theoretically enjoined in the New Testament. The wives are emphatically commanded "to submit themselves under their husbands, as to the Lord; for the husband is the head of the wife" (Ephes. v. 22, 23); the woman was created for the man (1 Corinth. xi. 9); she is commanded to be under obedience (1 Corinth. xiv. 34). The New Testament is, perhaps, even more rigorous than the Old; for whilst it commands the woman "to learn in silence with all subjection, but not to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence" (1 Timoth. ii. 11, 12), she was, in the Old Testament, admitted to the highest office of teaching, that of prophets, as Miriam, Deborah, and Huldah. Our text is, therefore, far from making man the tyrant of his wife, but designs him as her protector and superior adviser.

17—19. Man was from the beginning intended to work; he was placed in Paradise to keep and to cultivate it: but the toil and exhaustion of labour were the baneful consequences of man's sin; he was doomed to eat its produce with *pain*; ordinary attention was now no more sufficient. The great physical difficulties diminished his spiritual dignity. His time and his strength were henceforth, in a great measure, absorbed by the material cares of a toilsome life. His mind was curbed under the weight of bodily fatigue. The serene calmness of his soul was clouded by slavish hardship. He had attained the Divine faculty, but the drudgery of his life prevented him either from enjoying or from developing it. This is the *curse* of labour. And it seems to be repeated with emphasis: "thou art *dust*," not a god as thou hadst vainly hoped to become (ver. 19); the body is dissolved, though the imperishable spirit soars up to Him who has given it. Thus, our narrative explains or accounts for the difficulties of agriculture, which make life a perpetual struggle with repugnant elements: "In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat *bread*," not "*thy* bread"; for, hitherto, man had, without care and without trouble, lived on the beautiful fruits of Eden. Frequently, all the laborious exertions of the husbandman are lost; his anxiety is repaid with disappointment; he hopes that "his vineyard will bring forth grapes, and it produces wild grapes," and often even "briers and thorns" (Isai. v. 2, 6); his field bears "thistles instead of

days of thy life; 18. And thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; 19. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou returnest to the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou *art*, and to dust thou shalt return.—

wheat, and cockle instead of barley" (Job xxxii. 40);—in a word, the curse of God rests on the earth (comp. Sirach, vii. 16). Instead of eating the more nutritious produce of the corn-crops, he will often be compelled to be satisfied with "the herb of the field"; this alone will remain to him from the former blessing, as obtainable with less toil and exertion (i. 29); nor will he, expelled from the garden, find so many fruit-trees furnishing a delicious and abundant food. It was only by the proclamation of the fourth commandment that the panting exertion was partially relieved; it limited labour to six days of the week; the seventh day was restored to perfect rest; it recalls the pure happiness of Paradise; it does not share the curse of the working days; it is devoted to the mind and its elevation. The Decalogue is an emanation of love as well as of wisdom; it is a harbinger both of truth and of peace.—The life of the man is one of "pain," like that of woman (ver. 16); their punishment is equal in intensity; but it is very widely different, in character, from that of the serpent. And this leads us to the principal idea of our section, which has now been developed in almost its whole extent. The serpent was degraded, the human pair was ennobled by the glory of intelligence; the former was pressed down nearer to the earth, it was condemned to go upon the belly; the latter rose heavenwards on the youthful wings of the mind; the one eats dust, the other became capable of imbibing the dew of eternal truth. Thus, man has made a gigantic step beyond the limited sphere of his primitive existence. But, although he has not actually lost his innocence, he has ventured upon a path where it is difficult and almost impossible not to risk it. He has gained the liberty of choice, but that choice may be fatal; he has become the master of his destiny, but he may thereby become the author of his destruction. This is the danger and the curse. But even heathen authors had at least a dim notion of the dignity of labour; they understood, that work exercises the mind, and leads to inventions; that it engages the thoughts, and shields them against idle reveries; that it invigorates the heart, and keeps it aloof from corruption and effeminacy. Thus is just the punishment of sin, a weapon against it; labour was the consequence of past transgression, but it was destined to avert it for the future: wisdom had been acquired; and purity might be preserved by submitting to the price for which it was obtained. The wound had become necessary by man's disobedience; but it is a wound which restores better health. These are, with a beautiful expression of Gregory the Great, "the bitter arrows from the gentle hand of God."—But our passage teaches us further, that man, though destined to rule over nature, must yet humble himself before God; that he at once commands and obeys; and that in the feeling of the governor he must not forget the submissiveness of the child. This is another side of his twofold character.

20. The very curse which God had pronounced against the woman reminded Adam that she was dear to him in more than one respect. She was not only his companion, the partner of his life, but she was destined to become the mother of his children, in whom he would feel his own existence renewed, who would bear his likeness, and be the links which were to connect him with the remotest posterity. She was to him, at first, only "a woman" or part of man; now he was induced to change this general appellative designation for the significant and more specific name, "the mother of all living." Thus,

20. And the man called his wife's name Eve; for she became the mother of all living.—21. And the Lord God made to the man and to his wife garments of skins, and clothed them.—22. And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree

a double bond of affection tied him to his wife; she was the solace of the present, and the pledge of the future. The fall had not weakened but strengthened their conjugal love. The wife was, indeed, the only treasure which Adam took with him from Paradise into the desert of life, to remind him of a more than earthly happiness. Although she had just been the cause of death, he called her the "life-giving;" for through her the generations of man are eternal, although the individuals pass away. He had given her a name; and thus claimed and manifested his superiority over her.

21. Since garments had now become necessary by the aroused feeling of shame, God Himself prepared them, and clothed the first parents. Although He was forced to punish them, His love had not ceased. His paternal care accompanied them to the tumultuous arena of worldly strife. Scarcely any primitive nation has failed to use the skins of animals for the earliest clothing, and none was long deficient in the art of preparing them skilfully for convenience and neatness; the Phœnicians ascribed this invention to Usous, and the Samojedes, Esquimaux, and North American Indians are at present famous for their skill in preparing furs.—If any proof were necessary, that animals were believed to have, in Paradise also, been subject to death, those "skins" would be sufficient. Many and laborious have been the arguments to show that death came into the world only after the fall; this doctrine has been considered one of the strongest pillars of religion, and the necessary basis of every true science. If such an opinion were enforced by the Bible, a new breach between faith and science would be caused, as great and insuperable as any other hitherto discussed. For, the innumerable petrifactions in the interior of the earth preach with a thousand tongues that organic life was, by myriads of myriads, destroyed during immeasurable ages before the existence of man; and we know that the eating even of vegetable food is inseparable from a vast destruction of small living beings. But this difficulty does not exist. The Bible nowhere asserts, that the sin of Adam brought death upon the animals, *but only upon the human race.* The strictest comparison of all analogous passages renders this indisputable. The animals were, according to the Bible also, never exempt from death. It nowhere teaches clearly that the organization of the animals, like that of man, has been altered and depraved by the fall; though we must admit that it sometimes acknowledges a parallel or corresponding change in men and beasts (see vi. 12, 13); but we need certainly not to have recourse to the monstrous conjectures that the petrified animals in the earth never enjoyed real life; that their existence was only an appearance or a dream; and that they passed through a merely somnolent state! So far may piety stray from common sense, if it defies science; if it allows no scope to the intellect; if it thinks to feed one human faculty on the destruction of all the rest (see note on ix. 1—4).

22—24. By a guilty act had man attained the godlike knowledge of good and evil; he had thereby forfeited the privilege of eternal life originally designed for him. But Paradise, the abode of perfect bliss, could not resound with the agony of death. It was, therefore, necessary, that man should be expelled from thence for ever. If he remained in Eden, he might eat of the fruit of life, and thus remove the mortal condition which was now his fate. As he was created immortal, the partici-

of life, and eat, and live for ever: . . . 23. Therefore the Lord God sent him away from the garden of Eden, to till the ground whence he had been taken. 24. So He expelled the man; and He placed in the east of the garden of Eden the Cherubim, with the flame of the coruscant sword, to guard the way of the tree of life.

pation of the tree of life before the fall had no material influence; it gave only that with which he was already furnished. But when his sin had brought mortality upon him, it was important, that he should be exiled from the vicinity of that tree; for its fruit would have been effective in imparting to him that which he no longer possessed. Man had purchased knowledge at the expense of his eternity; both are united in God alone. But his expulsion was necessary for another reason also. The earth was cursed on account of man; thorns and thistles were to spring up in the places of his labour; the sphere of his activity must, therefore, be without the Paradise; this glorious abode could not be converted into fields disgraced by weeds and noxious herbs. Paradise, the easy existence of peace and delight, was for ever beyond the scope and grasp of man. By sin, man had been deprived of many of his former privileges; he had, above all, forfeited life; and even if he had already tasted of the tree of life, he would not have thereby conquered death; but, in order to make this impossible *for the future*, he was withdrawn from the sphere where it bloomed, and matured its tempting fruits (see on ii. 16, 17).—Man was not born without intelligence; even in his infancy he was infinitely superior to the rest of creation; he had the power of examining the individual character of all animals, and of fixing their names; he was even then the image of God; he was not without "knowledge," but he had not the "knowledge of good and evil"; he possessed the instinct of reason, but not the habit and energy of discernment; the germ had not yet emerged; the blade was yet unsheathed.

So entirely did God exclude the first couple from the garden of Eden, that He placed the cherubim in the east of it to guard its entrance; a flaming sword shines in their hands. The tree of life is the object of their care. Wonderful as the treasure, are the beings that watch over it. They are symbols of the presence of God. They were, in the Tabernacle, represented on the mercy-seat, and God throned between them. Here the blood of atonement was sprinkled, and here God communed with the priests, the instruments of His revelation. They witnessed the expiation of sin, and looked down upon the ark, which contained the tablets of the covenant between God and mankind. Mysterious, as in the Holy of Holies, is their presence before the garden of Eden. They guard, in both cases, an inestimable boon; they are types of the providence and proximity of God; and they are necessary, on account of the sin of man. But the Cherubim of the Paradise are the effects of the alienation of men from God; those on the mercy-seat symbolise their conciliation; the former guard a treasure which is for ever denied to man, the latter one which was proclaimed to all nations as their common inheritance; the former are, therefore, armed with a fearful weapon, resembling the terrific flashes of lightning, the others look lovingly down upon the ark, overshadowing it with their protecting wings; the one typify a covenant destroyed, the others a covenant concluded; and instead of the tree of life, of which the one deprives the human families, the others point to a treasure which is also "a tree of life to those who cling to it"; and instead of the life on earth, which was lost, a spiritual life, beautifying the heart and gladdening the soul, is promised and granted.

III.—THE GENERATIONS BETWEEN ADAM AND NOAH.

CHAPTER IV. 1. TO V. 32.

CHAPTER IV.

SUMMARY.—Adam and Eve begat two sons, Cain and Abel. The former became a husbandman, the other a shepherd. Both offered, after a certain time, the firstlings of their labour; but God rejected the gift of Cain, whilst He accepted that of Abel. Cain's jealousy was, by this mortification, enhanced into glowing hatred against his brother; God saw his sinister schemes, and forewarned him that offerings are not accepted unless they are accompanied by a benevolent and loving heart. The tumult in Cain's breast was temporarily silenced; but when he was alone with Abel in the field, his rankling envy overpowered him, and he killed his innocent brother (vers. 1—8). The justice of God was not slow in visiting this atrocious deed; Cain was declared an exile on the earth; the soil which it would be his lot to cultivate would be sterile and reluctant; he should not even have the consolation of an early death; and a mark was given to him, that nobody might kill him (vers. 9—15). He settled in the east of Eden, in the land of Nod, where he built a town, and called it Enoch, after his son (vers. 16, 17). The heads of the following generations are Irad, Mehujael, and Lamech. The latter took two wives, Adah and Zillah; by the former he became the father of Jabal, who was a breeder of cattle, and of Jubal, who was the inventor of musical instruments; and Zillah bare to him a daughter, Naamah, and a son Tubal-cain, who was skilled in the manufacture of implements of iron and brass. In that age the arts of peace began to flourish, and agriculture was improved (vers. 18—22). A personal incident concerning Lamech, one of great importance for the laws of the avenging of blood, is inserted (vers. 23, 24). Eve also bore another son, Seth; he became the father of Enos, in whose time religious worship assumed a higher and purer form (vers. 25, 26).

1. And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived,

1. Adam and Eve shared faithfully the miseries of exile; their mutual love was the only reminiscence of the happy days of Eden; a son was the first offspring of their affection; the delighted mother exclaimed with mingled feelings of gratitude and pride: "I have acquired a son with the Lord," and called him Cain. The "mother of all living" had begun to justify her name; she had added a link to the chain of human generations; the first germ for the perpetuity of mankind was sown. This son belonged to her; he was the first-born of her pains; she had borne him long under her heart, and had in tender hopes watched the mystery of his birth; it was, therefore, from her, that he received his name; she had obtained this right from her greater anxieties, her fonder cares; and the name which she gave to the child expressed well the manifold emotions of her soul: her son was not, like herself and her husband, the direct creation of God Himself; nor did he see the light of day without His omnipotent help—for who understands the secret development of the slumbering embryo?—he was, indeed, *her* son; she was conscious of it with a certain legitimate dignity; but she acknowledged with humility, that, without the assistance of God, her strength would have been of no avail; the chief glory belongs to Him who shields the mother, and protects the offspring.—When Seth, the ancestor of the pious Noah, was born (v. 3), it is expressly added, that Adam begat him "in his own likeness, after his image," that he, therefore, bore the seal and impress of God Himself. It would have

and bore Cain, and said, I have acquired a man with the Lord.—2. And she bore further his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.—3. And in the process of time it came to pass,

been a profanation to ascribe this Divine resemblance to Cain the fratricide, who soon forgot his higher origin, sank into a fearful abyss of degeneracy, and even destroyed wantonly an "image of God." But, although the heavenly outlines were obliterated in the vicious mind of Cain, they had originally existed there; he also had inherited the Divine likeness; every human being, however base and abject, is a work of the holy Creator; although Cain, therefore, had a large portion of the weakness of the woman, although he succumbed under the temptation, like his mother Eve, and although he was, like her, the cause of premature death: he possessed a Divine spark which could not entirely be extinguished, which was even capable of being rekindled to feelings of repentance and atonement; and justly, therefore, might Eve impart to him a name which describes his double descent both from her, and from God.

The principal stress in the words of Eve lies on: "I have acquired," not on "a man." Although the Hebrew families exulted with greater joy at the birth of a son than of a daughter, since sons preserve the name of the father, propagate his race, and promise naturally a more powerful support to the parents: the *mother* alludes here rejoicingly to the birth of a child in general, an offspring of her womb, and a gift of God; she calls this child *Cain*, or Acquisition; the name expresses merely gratitude and satisfaction; it contains no allusion whatever to the sex of the child; when her next son, Seth, intended to replace Abel, was born, it is simply stated that Adam became father, and the following name only shows the sex of the child: the joy of Eve may have been enhanced by the circumstance that she had given birth to *a son*; but both in her heart and in her words that feeling was overbalanced by the more universal delight of having become a mother. The privilege of naming the child was, by the Hebrews, often yielded to the wife; the offspring to which she gave birth renewed and strengthened the affection of her husband; it was for her a time of pride and gratification: and this is another proof of the respect with which the Hebrew women were treated.

2. Labour had commenced. It was necessary to cultivate nature with exertion, and to subdue the animal creation in order to obtain a sufficient sustenance. The treasures of the earth were ransacked, and the tribes of the plains and forests were subjected. Agriculture and breeding of cattle were the earliest occupations which necessity dictated. Man was taught the former by nature herself which, in autumn, casts numberless seeds upon the fields, in order to revive them in the following spring as plants of beauty or utility: and in the latter he was his own instructor; he felt his superiority over many animals; he conquered them easily, attached them to himself, and made them serve his use. First he subjected the weaker and tamer animals; Abel was a "keeper of sheep"; he was, no doubt, for a considerable time satisfied with their milk and their wool; much later only he found their flesh tasteful and healthy; he learnt to prepare it; and deemed it a fit and worthy offering of gratitude which he owed to the Deity. The eldest son of the first human pair followed the occupation of his father; he was, like him, guided by the example of nature; he was a husbandman. The second son advanced an important step; he began to submit to his authority a part of the animate creation; he commenced to prove, that man is not only the possessor, but the ruler of the earth; and he became a herdsman.

3—8. God blessed the activity of both brothers; they knew that He alone is the source of success and prosperity; and

that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering to the Lord. 4. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of their fat. And the Lord had regard for Abel and for his offering: 5. But for Cain

they felt the desire of acknowledging His sovereignty by presenting to Him the best part of their property. The first sacrifices were offered. They were not commanded, but spontaneous gifts; they were dictated by no other sentiment but that of gratitude, in which a feeling of humble dependence, and, perhaps, the wish of further success secretly mingled. Thus far, both brothers were equally righteous and equally pious. But yet God accepted Abel's offering only, whilst He rejected that of Cain. Why was this the case? The text gives no direct clue; and conjecture has been busy to discover a reason. At present, it is customary to say that God intended to show that He preferred the magnificent animal sacrifices to the comparatively poor vegetable offerings; or that the Hebrew writer wished to sanction his system of sacrificial laws by a striking instance taken from the history of the earliest generations. But supposing even that God feels that preference, where did He intimate it to the first men? If Cain offered his first-fruits with the same cheerful good-will as Abel brought the firstlings of his flock and their fat, why should his gifts be less acceptable? "Does God delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices so much as in obedience? Is not obedience better than sacrifice, and attention to His will better than the fat of rams"? (1 Sam. xv. 22). And should not God look even with greater benevolence upon a vegetable offering, produced with sweat and toil from the stubborn earth, which had just been laden with the curse of sterility, than upon the firstlings of the flock, which were bred in a life of ease and leisure; for which "man had neither toiled, nor which he had reared"?—Or should Cain alone bear the malediction laid upon the soil on account of his parents' sin? Did he not, on the contrary, deserve higher praise, since he did not try to evade, but to counterbalance and alleviate its effect? We can, therefore, find the reason of the rejection of Cain's offering neither in its objects nor in his own vocation as agriculturist. And yet we must expect impartial justice in the Divine acts. And this justice will be manifest, if we but correctly understand the words which God addressed to Cain, when He perceived his anger and ominous despondency: "If thou doest well, wilt thou not find acceptance? But if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." It is, then, evident that the heart of Cain had no more been pure; that it had been imbued with a criminal propensity; that this sin made the favourable acceptance of his offering impossible; that his gift would have been as delightful in the eyes of God as that of Abel, if it had proceeded from a mind unstained by vicious thoughts. But Cain was grateful to God; he brought Him, as a mark of his gratitude, of the produce of his labour; he valued His applause highly, and His displeasure shed a gloom of wretchedness over his soul. He must, then, have sinned, not against God, but against man. And here the supposition is obvious, that envy and jealousy had long filled the heart of Cain, when he contrasted his laborious and toilsome life with the pleasant and easy existence of his brother Abel. With incessant exertion, tormented by anxiety, and helplessly dependent on the uncertainty of the skies, he forced a scanty subsistence out of the womb of the repugnant soil; whilst his brother enjoyed a life of security and abundance, in the midst of rich valleys, beautiful hills, and charming rural scenes. And while he envied Abel's prosperity, he despised his idleness, which was indebted for the necessaries of life to the liberality of nature, rather than to personal exertions. Thus

and for his offering He had no regard. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. 6. And the Lord said to Cain, Why art thou angry? and why is thy countenance fallen? 7. If thou doest well, *wilt thou not find*

hatred and jealousy took root in Cain's heart. He beheld the happiness of his brother with the feelings of an enemy. The joy at the success of his own labours was embittered by the aspect of his brother's greater affluence. How could God look with delight upon an offering which the offerer himself did not regard with unalloyed satisfaction? How could He encourage by His applause a man whose heart was poisoned by the mean and miserable passion of envy? Is not jealousy a sure indication of a dissatisfied mind? Could, then, the gratitude which Cain owed to God be pure and noble, when it was contaminated by the sickly hue of rancour? It was from this reason that God said to Cain: "If thou doest well, wilt thou not find acceptance?" The rejection of his offering was, therefore, a proof of Cain's sinful disposition.

But it was more; it was an admonition to banish low sentiments from his heart; it was a warning, that if iniquity was not eradicated from the bosom in the very germ, it would, with its luxuriant weeds, soon destroy all its health and vigour. God's answer contained the grave lesson, that one evil deed is always the parent of other and greater sins; that it is extremely difficult to arrest the demoniac power of wickedness in its baneful career: "if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." Envy ended with murder; the noxious root had matured a poisonous fruit; moral disease finished with moral death. It impressed the momentous truth, that sin has the irresistible propensity of attacking and tempting the heart of man; that an eternal warfare is roused in his bosom from the moment that sin first enters it; "that its desire is to him." But since every human heart encloses the seed of evil, this struggle agitates, though in very various forms, every man; it is the main element of his internal life; it is the principal task of his spiritual existence to proceed as conqueror out of these severe combats; therefore God said, in conclusion, to Cain, more as an encouragement than a reproach: "but thou shalt rule over it"; it was still in his power to obtain a triumph; if he was unable to destroy the enemy, he might, at least, disarm him; if he could not expel him entirely, he might, at least, prevent his progress.

These serious and emphatic warnings seemed to have produced the desired effect upon Cain's mind. He spoke in a friendly and benevolent tone to his more favoured brother; he silenced, for a moment, the turbulent voice of hatred; and both turned reconciled to their occupations "in the field." But when, there, Cain again saw his brother, perhaps, cheerfully repose in the shadow of a far-spreading tree, his flock pasturing calmly and peacefully around him, whilst he himself toiled, with his imperfect instruments, either to "sow the seeds with tears," or to gather in the scanty crop with sorrow; the old feelings of bitterness were revived; the Divine admonitions were effaced; sin attacked him anew; its "desire was upon him"; and, in a moment of infatuation, he killed him whom Providence had destined to teach him new feelings of tenderness, and whose love ought to have been to him the best and earliest school of humanity.

This appears to be the internal meaning of our narrative; and, thus understood, it offers a very appropriate connection with the preceding section. The last chapters described the *origin* of sin; our narrative develops its *progress*. Eve was tempted by an external object of pleasure, Cain allowed his heart to be impregnated with the poison of jealousy; the mother was disobedient in the hope of obtaining a high intellectual boon, the son sinned

acceptance? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door, and to thee *is* its desire; but thou shalt rule over it. 8. And Cain spoke with Abel his brother. And it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose against Abel his brother, and slew him.—9. And the Lord said to Cain, Where *is* Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: *Am* I my brother's keeper? 10. And He said,

merely to destroy the happiness of another without thereby increasing his own; the former brought death into the world, the latter murder. The sin of Eve marked the period when the innocence of childhood is endangered by the consciousness of good and evil, and when the first act of free-will is also the first error; the deed of Cain describes the more advanced epoch of manhood when the strife and struggle with practical life is hottest; when the heart is assailed by numberless perils and collisions; when ambition excites the imagination; and the warfare of competition taxes and stimulates all the energies of man. The first sin was against God; the second both against God, and a brother. But the source of either was the covetous desire of the heart. The Bible reminds man incessantly, that within himself is the spring of life and death.

The first death was a premature one; Abel was taken from the earth at an early period of his life; his very name expresses his short and fleeting existence; his sinful parents and the fratricide Cain survived him for a considerable period. But the early death of Abel could be no punishment; he seemed, in fact, to enjoy the particular favour of God; his offering was graciously accepted. We find, therefore, in our narrative the great and beautiful thought, that life is not the highest boon; that the pious find a better existence, and a more blissful reward in another and purer sphere; but that crime and guilt are the greatest evils, that they are punished by a long, wearisome life, full of fear and care, and compunctions of conscience. Innocence is more precious than many years, and to suffer is better than to domineer.

We may notice the fact, that in our narrative a particular stress seems to be laid upon the word *brother*. A certain emphasis is evidently intended by this striking repetition; it implies the soul-stirring antithesis, that the brother, the best and most faithful companion of life, was the first who succumbed to the murderous weapon; that the ties which nature had lovingly woven were wantonly torn by nature herself; that the two chief occupations of rural tribes which ought to complete and to assist each other, like the helping hands of brothers, were from the beginning doomed to mutual jealousy and to sanguinary hatred. If the flocks, by chance, strayed upon the cultivated ground of the husbandman, a deadly strife commenced, and the shepherd as well as the flock were frequently the victims of the hardy labourer, whose soul easily lost its native gentleness by continuous and wearisome labour, and by the permanent struggle with the sterile or weed-covered soil.

9—12. The earth had, for the first time, been stained with human blood. An image of God had been destroyed. A feeling of horror and detestation moves the historian. Nowhere does he rise to a more powerful emphasis than when denouncing the nefariousness of murder. It is an impious attack against the sacredness of God Himself. The voice of the blood cries up to heaven, and demands expiation. The earth has opened her womb to receive the body of a brother. The punishment of Cain is pronounced with an energy which overwhelms even his obdurate mind. He feels the weight of his sin, and the magnitude of the sufferings which he has deserved; and he regains his tranquillity only by a re-assuring sign

What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother's blood crieth to Me from the ground. 11. And now *art* thou cursed from the ground, which hath opened its mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand. 12. When thou tillest the ground, it shall no more yield to thee its strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be on the earth.—13. And Cain said to the Lord, My punishment

of God.—The earth was now burthened with a double curse. It was overspread with thorns and thistles, and was polluted by the blood of a pious relative; it had hitherto only been repugnant, it now became impure; and, instead of a nutritive grain, it had received a destroyed human life. Blood had been sown, and misery in abundance was the melancholy harvest.

The crime must be avenged. God Himself appears to perform this unwelcome act of justice. At first, the murderer, impelled by cowardice and fear, attempts to evade the Divine retribution. He affects innocence. The first sinners "were ashamed" after their disobedience; they hid themselves, and evaded the presence of God. But Cain met the voice of God with barefaced boldness: "Am I my brother's keeper?" The monster, Sin, had advanced a significant step. But God, without stopping to reproach him with this new offence, states his crime in terms of unmitigated severity. He describes it as an act of the utmost atrocity, horrifying even inanimate nature. And He proceeds at once to name the well-merited punishment. Cain shall be exiled from the land of his parents; he shall wander through the earth without ever finding abodes entirely to his satisfaction; he, the agriculturist, who, above all other men, requires fixed and settled habitations for the success of his labours, shall be doomed to roam over spacious tracts for the pursuit of his occupation. To remain on the spot where the nefarious deed of fratricide had been committed, would have been impossible. Could he be happy on the scene of his degeneracy? or could the soil which had been polluted with human blood yield its strength to the murderer? The land which witnesses the abomination of bloodshed "vomits out" its inhabitants (see note on ix. 5—7). Cain is, therefore, "*cursed away from* the land which had opened its mouth to receive his brother's blood;" he shall wander as a homeless vagabond, an object both of aversion and of pity. Hence the meaning of the much-disputed words: "cursed art thou from the land," is clear; they imply the beautiful idea, that the sad reminiscences of guilt banish the sinner away even from the dear scenes of childhood; that the never-slumbering associations of crime persecute the miserable sinner who flies from land to land, vainly hoping to escape the scourges of a burthened conscience. The connection between a man and the spot in which he abandoned himself to wickedness is for ever severed. Such a place scarcely can endure, much less support or cheer him. And thus was Cain compelled to leave the house of his parents, because his crime had spread grief among them, and had stained the soil on which they dwelt; just as Israel was later banished from the Holy Land, because it had beheld their evil deeds, and was defiled with the blood of civil wars.

13—16. Cain is threatened with flight and exile. He cannot bear the idea of a roaming life. He feels that he is, as it were, banished from the presence of God; for he has forfeited His favour. Thus, after the Divine punishment has been pronounced, rises within him that sentiment of shame, which his parents had experienced and evinced immediately after their sin, and he exclaims: "I must hide myself before Thy face." But fear mingles with the gloomy anticipation of

is greater than I can bear. 14. Behold, Thou drivest me out this day from the land; and from Thy face must I hide myself; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond on

a toilsome existence; he apprehends the revenge of those to whom the memory of his innocent brother is dearer than his own disgraceful existence; he clings to life with all the tenacity of a worldling; and, in utter despondency, he cries: "my punishment is too great to be borne." God relented, therefore, from the rigor of the avenging of blood, gave him a sign, which assured him that nobody should attack his life, and threatened a severe punishment against those who would lay hand on Cain. We may ask, with some degree of surprise, why God granted this uncommon indulgence to a murderer, who had insidiously killed his own brother? Did not God Himself give the distinct precept: "He who sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed"? Why was it necessary to take such anxious precautions to save a life forfeited according to human and Divine rights? We hesitate to speak with decision where the text is entirely silent. But we may venture the supposition, that if Cain's blood was to be "shed by man," it would also have been by the hand of a brother, for no other men existed; the firstborn of Adam's strength, and the pride of his mother, would have perished by a cold law of retaliation; the avenging of the crime would, in the result, have been as horrible as the crime itself; and the human family, just called into being, would have perpetrated self-destruction in its first generations. It was thus necessary that God should Himself exercise the duty of punishment, and dispense a chastisement commensurate with the unnatural and fatal offence. A long, laborious life in exile, with the fear of sanguinary retribution perpetually impending, was deemed equivalent to death; and the lamentations of Cain, when he heard the verdict of his flight, prove the bitterness of his pangs. And this is the other side of a profound Biblical idea which we have above pointed out. As the early death of Abel was no curse, so was the long life of Cain no blessing. He was permitted to protract an existence, veiled by the gloom of the past, and uncheered by any hope of the future. No earthly boon, not even long life, the greatest of all, is, in itself, either a pledge of happiness, or a mark of the Divine favour. The great questions which are discussed in the book of Job are, in their deepest essence, practically embodied in the history of the first brothers. Jehovah does not, like the Persian Ormuzd, guarantee all temporal blessings also; these are shadows without substance; they are, in a great measure, left to the prudence and personal exertion of man. It was impossible, that, among the Hebrews, the priests could obtain that power which, for instance, the Lamaic faith permits them, not only of deciding the spiritual welfare of the people, but of distributing the goods of this world. The external prosperity of man is not, as among the Hindoos, considered as the reward of the virtue displayed in some fancied previous state of existence; nor are his sufferings deemed the punishments for crimes there performed; the rich and happy are regarded without envy, and the poor and wretched without contempt; pride is excluded in the one, and self-respect is upheld in the other. This earth is the sphere of action allotted to man; but the designs of God reach beyond the limits of time into the abyss of eternity.

The chief punishment of Cain was his expulsion from the land of his birth; if the words of God (vers. 10—12) left any doubt in this respect, it would be removed by the unequivocal reply of Cain, who lays a powerful stress upon the roaming and outcast life to which he is condemned; and if any other thought occupied him besides, it was the fear with which the enormity of his crime overwhelmed him, or the just apprehensions inspired by the consciousness of a moral order ruling

the earth; and it shall come to pass, *that* every one that findeth me shall slay me. 15. And the Lord said to him, Therefore, whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance

the affairs of the world, and swaying as the nemesis of iniquity; a consciousness inextinguishable even in the breast of the most degenerate criminal. But with no word did he allude to the sterility of the soil which he would have to cultivate in his new abodes. Not the earth, in general, will cease to give to Cain its strength, but only that part of it which "had opened its mouth to receive the blood of his brother"; the regions "in the east of the Eden," to which he was banished, are by no means remarkable for barrenness; the eastern part of Asia contains, on the contrary, some of the most blooming and most fertile tracts of the habitable globe. This circumstance is of great importance in the just estimation of the punishment decreed against Cain. He suffered, in reality, nothing but the curse of Adam, though in a more intense degree. He was, like him, expelled from the dwelling-place of his earlier years, and he became, like him, from that day liable to death; for the father became mortal by his disobedience; and the son lived after his crime in constant fear of the avenger of blood. Thus the curse of Cain contains no new element; the anger of God had exhausted itself in the punishment of the first parents; but the endless variety of crimes is attended by tortures of conscience of endless degrees and forms. The soil, and the occupations of agriculture, were already so heavily laden with the Divine malediction, that they were scarcely capable of a severer execration. Cain continued, but did not then commence the struggle with the hardships and difficulties of the earth. This toil forms, therefore, no part in the despondency of his complaint.

The estrangement of Cain's heart from God was the cause of his exile; he had thereby forfeited His benevolence and His grace; he was obliged "to hide himself before His face"; guilt produced shame; God would not any longer "lift up His countenance upon him," because He could not smile with delight upon the merciless sinner. This is the true sense of the words, "from Thy face shall I hide myself"; they do not imply the almost heathen idea, that the presence of God is bound to a certain spot, which He has chosen for His residence, or the sphere of His activity; that He remained in the abode of Adam and his wife, but was not in the land of Cain's exile. It would, indeed, be a superfluous task to prove that the doctrine of the omnipresence of God is one of the great fundamental Biblical truths; such phrases as, "he fled before God" (Jon. i. 3, 10), express merely the desperate intention of escaping the decree, or avoiding a commission, of God; and the concluding words of our passage: "Cain went out from the presence of the Lord," are strictly parallel with the passage in Job: "And Satan went out from the presence of God" (i. 12; ii. 7); they signify that Cain's interview with God was finished; and that he prepared himself to emigrate from the abode of his youth. It is more than surprising, it is almost incredible, that many modern critics ascribe to God that narrow limitation of His presence; it is nothing less than a total destruction of Biblical theology to enclose God, the Ruler of the universe, whom the heaven and the heaven of heavens do not contain, in a circumscribed place, which He changes whenever His favoured people change their abodes. The heathens invented different deities for the different elements. These modern notions would degrade the God of the Bible to a local deity, without even the dignity of a permanent attribute!

God gave a sign to Cain, continues our text, lest he should be killed by any one who found him. We do not know, nor is it important to enquire, in what that sign consisted. But it is evident, that it was necessarily of a permanent character, visible not only momentarily to Cain

shall be taken for him sevenfold. And the Lord gave a sign to Cain, lest any one finding him should kill him.—16. And Cain went from the presence of the

alone, but during his life-time to all other men; for, thus only would it have the effect of preventing his assassination by a future avenger of blood. An evanescent sign or miracle was not sufficient; this would, on the one hand, have afforded to Cain no material safety; and might, on the other hand, furnish to other murderers a welcome opportunity of cunningly evading the punishment merited at human hands. Such transitory signs were appropriately given where merely belief in some future or unexpected event was to be enforced. Moses was assured of his future success before Pharaoh by the miracles of the rod and the leprous hand. Hezekiah was convinced of his deliverance from the enemy by the retrogressive movement of the sun-dial; and sometimes even the promise of a future sign sufficed for an event which was to occur in a still later period. But, in our case, not merely belief, and a sense of security on the part of Cain, were the end of the Divine sign; this was but one of the purposes which it was to serve; another as important object was, to enable his fellowmen to know and to avoid him. God might, indeed, have protected him in some supernatural manner; but this He did not do; He left the possibility of his becoming the victim of human revenge; and this is evident from the menace which God added: "Whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken for him (Cain) sevenfold": if the sign was not unmistakeably visible to all, Cain was neither sufficiently shielded, nor could so severe a punishment have been pronounced against him who might kill him. Whether, then, the author believed, that such a sign was attached to Cain's person, is not certain; but it is not improbable. Marks of ignominy for degrading conduct were common among the eastern nations; and the Hebrew servant who disdained the supreme boon of liberty after six years of bondage, suffered public perforation of his ears, both as a sign of his baseness, and as an indisputable mark of his identity. We may, therefore, find, in this part of our narrative, the important practical and philosophical truth, that the traces of crime are indelibly visible in the person of the criminal; the "human form divine" is degraded and corrupted by vice; it loses that sublime dignity with which a pure and noble soul never fails to impress it; the shy look, the uncertain step, the sinister reserve, the lurking passion, these and many other symptoms of the highest interest for the physiognomist, mark the outcast of society, and make the man conspicuous upon whose conscience weighs the burden of an enormous misdeed.

Cain settled "in the land of *Nod*, in the east of Eden." It is evident, that the name Nod expresses the nature and character of the locality; it signifies flight or exile; and the same root means sometimes, grief and mourning. Nod is, therefore, the land of misery and exile. But, although this appellative signification of Nod is clear, it is not less certain, that the historian intended to describe thereby a distinct country; he designates its position in the east of Eden; and he mentions a town which Cain built in that land of flight. Nod is, therefore, as little as Eden itself, a mere abstraction, or a fictitious name, invented for the embodiment of a myth. But, as it is only described by its relative position to Eden, its situation is, naturally, as disputed as that of Paradise itself. It has been placed in Susiana, Lydia, and Arabia, in Nysa and China; in the mountains of the Caucasus and the vast steppes in the east of Cashmere; in Tartary, in Parthia, or any part of India. However, it appears that the whole extent of Asia eastward of Eden, was comprised under the name of Nod; Cain was expelled to the east of Paradise, where the Cherubim with their flaming swords for ever prevented the access; we are, thus, expressly reminded, that the mur-

Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod, in the east of Eden.—17. And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bore Enoch; and he built a city, and called the name of

derer, who with one audacious step ascended the whole climax of crime, was removed far from the seat of blessedness and innocence; and it is natural, that his numerous descendants spread further and further in the same eastern direction, till they were believed to occupy the whole vast territory beyond the Indus, which, as we have shown, is the most eastern river mentioned in the description of Paradise. Nor do we believe this opinion to be devoid of a fruitful idea. The intercourse and commerce of the Israelites seldom extended beyond the Tigris, and scarcely ever beyond the Indus. The nations, therefore, which lived to the east of this river, were of no historical or social interest to the Hebrews. They were excluded from every contact with the people of God. It is, therefore, natural, that they should have been considered less favoured; that their agricultural pursuits, far from the great and exciting political life of the west, should be regarded as the effect of Divine displeasure; the "land of exile" embracing all those tribes which were unconnected, by any internal or external link, with the chosen people, lay, as it were, under the curse of banishment, far from the selected land of Divine glory. Thus, the repeated lamentations of Cain, regarding his flight, receive new vigour and emphasis.

From the "garden of delight," a part of the young human family was removed into the "land of flight" within one single generation; the fall by disobedience was too soon followed by degeneracy and violence; the newly acquired gift of knowledge led, in its first exercise, to error and to crime; reason, too weak to rule, was overpowered by passion; the spiritual part succumbed, and the earthly elements obtained a fatal ascendancy.

17. Cain was soon domiciled in the land of Nod, for his vocation as husbandman forced him to seek settled abodes; he had taken his wife with him from the paternal house; she was evidently his sister, since Adam and Eve are represented as the only primitive human pair. Such alliances were, even in much later times, and among very civilised nations, not considered incestuous; the Athenian law made it compulsory to marry the sister, if she had not found a husband at a certain age; Abraham married his half-sister, Sarah; and the legislator Moses himself was the offspring of a matrimony which he later interdicted as unholy (Exod. ii. 1, vi. 20). The great and important principle of the unity of the human race was to be proclaimed and enforced; one couple were, therefore, made the progenitors of the whole human family; all other considerations were deemed of minor importance compared with that momentous doctrine which twines a tie of brotherhood around all nations and all ages; a plurality of first couples would have prevented marriages which were later justly regarded with abomination, but it would have destroyed a fundamental truth, which is the germ of noble social virtues, and which sheds brilliant rays of hope over the confusion of national strife and warfare.

Cain became the father of a son; he called him Enoch. This name cannot be without meaning, for Cain soon afterwards built a town, which he called Enoch after his son. The Hebrew root to which it belongs has two principal significations: to teach, and to consecrate. The name of Cain's son seems to point to the former, that of the town to the latter meaning. Cain had felt the curse of impiousness; he could not master his vices or his passions; although he struggled against them, he fell and succumbed; he began the resistance when the enemy in his heart had gained too much power; even the solemn warning of God, that he ought manfully to oppose his evil disposition, was of no avail. He wished that his son, at least, should reap the benefit of his own mourn-

the city, after the name of his son, Enoch.—18. And to Enoch was born Irad: and Irad begat Mehujael: and Mehujael begat Methusael: and Methusael begat Lamech.

ful experience; he intended to instruct him from his early years in the duties of virtue, and he called him by a name which involuntarily reminds of the maxim: "Train a child in the way he should go; even when he is old, he will not depart from it." And when he later built the first city, and called it "consecration," he meant to intimate that the firstling of his social prosperity belongs to God, for he had learnt to appreciate the value of His blessing; and, at the same time, he perpetuated the name of his son, in whom all his hope and all his joy were centred.

It was a very decided step towards civilisation, when the idea of building a city was first conceived and realised. The roaming life of the homeless savage was abandoned; social ties were formed; families joined families, and exchanged in friendly intercourse their experience and observations; communities arose, and submitted to the rule of self-imposed laws; the individuals resigned the unchecked liberty of the beasts of the forest, and felt the delight of being subservient links in the universal chain. Social and personal excellence depend on, and strengthen each other. Therefore, when the first communities were organised, the way to a steady and continuous progress was paved, and the first beams of dawning humanity trembled over the night of barbarism and ferocity. It is a deep trait in the Biblical account to ascribe the origin of cities to none but the agriculturist. Unlike the nomad, who changes his temporary tents whenever the state of the pasture requires it, the husbandman is bound to the glebe which he cultivates; the soil to which he devotes his strength and his anxieties becomes dear to him; that part of the earth to which he owes his sustenance assumes a character of holiness in his eyes; and if, besides, pledges of conjugal love have grown up in that spot, he is more strongly still tied to it; he fixes there his permanent abode, and considers its loss a curse of God. Thus, even in the "land of flight," the agriculturist Cain was compelled to build houses and to form a city. Many inventions of mechanical skill are inseparable from the building of towns; ingenuity was aroused and exercised; and whilst engaged in satisfying the moral desire of sociability, man brought many of his intellectual powers into efficient operation. Necessity suggested, and perseverance executed, inventions which safety or comfort required; and when man left the caverns which nature had beneficently provided for his dwelling-places, to inhabit the houses which his own hands had built, he entered them with that legitimate pride which the consciousness of superior skill begets, and with the consoling conviction, that although God had doomed him, on account of his own and his ancestors' sins, to a life full of fatigue and struggles, He had graciously furnished him with a spark of that heavenly fire which strengthens him to endure and to conquer.

Greek mythology also attributes to the agricultural tribes the first building of houses and cities. Ceres, aided by all the gods and goddesses, erected the walls and finished the roofs; she herself taught the first citizens the rudiments of a social legislation, and united solemnly a young couple in the sacred bond of matrimony. In the Hebrew records, this progress is both more moral and more rapid. The first parents already formed a united household; the example of a social life under the authority of a chief was given; and in the next generation a man of energy and influence might already establish himself as the head of a well-regulated community.

We have above attempted to explain the meaning of the name of the town Enoch. But to define its position is an impossibility. It lies "in the land of

19. And Lamech took two wives: the name of the one *was* Adah, and the name of the other Zillah. 20. And Adah bore Jabal: he was the father of those who dwell in

Nod," which is itself not described by any more distinct criterion than that it is situated "in the east of Eden." If the position of the latter should be settled beyond dispute, it will be time to search for a distinct locality both of Nod and Enoch. If the land of Nod is, at least, to be determined as the whole region of Asia to the east of the Tigris, it would be preposterous to fix in this vast territory upon a spot for the town of Enoch. Vague resemblances with later Greek or Eastern names have here also been the only guides of those who think it either necessary or possible to settle every minute detail of Biblical antiquities. It is an essential part of every science to distinguish and to acknowledge what it is impossible to know. And a certain subdued light, a *chiaroscúro*, is well befitting the earliest deeds and sufferings of mankind. The progress from the delightful innocence of childhood (Eden), through the struggle and guilt of the awakening physical and moral strength (Nod), back to the conscious virtue by training and instruction (Enoch), is a type more to be conceived by the internal eye than to be palpably constructed for the senses.

18—24. The historian passes rapidly over the next four generations. After the first formation of towns, and the organisation of communities, there is necessarily a long pause before any decided advance is made in social life. Numberless claims are to be adjusted, endless conflicts to be settled; and experience suggests a thousand improvements in the institutions and all external arrangements. Centuries elapse before the political life admits of, or urges on to, a further progress. This important step was reserved to the fifth generation. One of Lamech's sons was Jubal. He was the inventor of musical instruments. Necessity had been the mother of the first discoveries, and had prompted to the earliest exercise of the moral energies. A certain simple comfort was the consequence of this activity; and security and ease gave leisure and cheerfulness *for the cultivation of the fine arts.* The bare and rude wants were supplied; and the mind was sufficiently vacant to desire *beauty.* The toilsome existence was ennobled by the admixture of a higher element. The inexorable necessaries of daily life absorbed no more the whole attention or the entire strength; the soul and the heart also, demanded and obtained their food and nurture; Lamech was the first poet (vers. 23, 24), and his son the first musician; the "sweat of the brow" was temporarily dried by the heavenly sunshine of art; the curse of Adam was, in a great measure, conquered by the perseverance and the gentleness of his descendants. Everybody will readily admit, that this was a most important step in the advancement of society; for, materialism with its degrading tendencies of cold expediency was, in some measure, dethroned; it became a co-ordinate part of a higher striving, which found its reward, not in selfish utility, but in a free and elevating recreation. It is true, that most of the ancient nations ascribed the invention of musical instruments to their deities: the Egyptians believed that Thot, the god of wisdom and knowledge, the friend of Osiris, invented the three-stringed lyre; the Greeks represented Pan or Mercury as the first artists on the flute; and music was generally considered a divine gift, and an immediate communication from the gods. But our context describes the invention of these instruments in a far deeper manner; it embodies it organically in the history of the human families, and assigns to it that significant place which its internal character demands.

It is not an accidental fact, that the lyre and the flute were introduced by the brother of a nomadic herdsman (Jabal). It is in the happy leisure of this occupation, that mu-

tents, and *of those who have* cattle. 21. And his brother's name *was* Jubal: he was the father of all such as use the lyre and the flute. 22. And Zillah, she also bore Tubal-cain, a sharpener of all instruments of brass and iron: and the sister of Tubal-cain *was* Naamah. 23. And Lamech said to his wives,

sic is generally first exercised and appreciated, and the idyllic tunes of the shepherd find their way, either with his simple instruments, or after the invention of others of a more developed description, into the house of the citizen, and the palace of the monarch. — But we must not be surprised to find here Jabal described as "the father of those who dwell in tents, and of those who have cattle" (ver. 20), although Abel had already followed the same pursuits (ver. 2). Every single remark proves the depth of thought, and the comprehensiveness of the views of the Hebrew writer. Abel had been murdered, most probably without leaving children; yet, his occupation could not die out with him; breeding of cattle is a calling too necessary, and at the same time too inviting, not to be resumed by some later-born individual. But in the family of Cain rested the curse of blood-shed; the crime was to be expiated by severe labour; in the fourth generation it was atoned for (Exod. xx. 5); and now were the Cainites permitted to indulge extensively in the easy life of herdsmen; the blood of Abel was avenged, and with the restored guiltlessness returned affluence, and — mirth, which is aptly symbolized by the invention of music.

Jabal and Jubal were Lamech's sons with Adah; but he had another wife, Zillah, who bore him also a son, Tubal-cain. He was a "sharpener of all instruments of brass and iron"; and this seems to imply, that he continued the ancestral pursuit of agriculture, but that he also improved the necessary implements; he invented the practical arts of whetting ploughs, and of making, by the aid of fire, other instruments materially mitigating the toil and hardship which the cultivation of the soil imposes upon the laborious countryman. And are we not justified in finding in this alleviation of the manual labour also, a relaxation of the severe curse pronounced against his ancestor Cain?

Daughters are not usually mentioned in genealogical lists, except where in later history they obtain some individual distinction. We shall, however, not urge too much the question, why Naamah is here introduced, as the only female descendant of Cain? And, since the name alone is mentioned, it can be our only guide in attempting a reply; but, considering the general significance of the names, we shall scarcely go astray in following that trace. Naamah signifies, the lovely, beautiful woman; whilst the wife of the first man was simply Eve, the life-giving. Who does not see the obvious progress in the intervening generations? It is the same remarkable change in women, as we have just pointed out in men. The women were, in the age of Lamech, no more regarded merely as the propagators of the human family; beauty and gracefulness began to command homage; the woman was no more merely the "help" of the husband, but his most beautiful *ornament*; if the eye finds an independent delight in lovely appearance, gross materialism is conquered; and man has entered the period of *art*, which consists essentially in the spiritualisation of the sensual conceptions. Even the wives of Lamech manifest the transition into this epoch of beauty; for, whilst one wife, Zillah, reminds still of assistance and protection, the other, Adah, bears a name almost synonymous with Naamah, and, likewise, signifying ornament and loveliness.—We may add, that the son of the former (Tubal-cain) was the inventor of

Adah and Zillah, hear my voice,
Ye wives of Lamech, listen to my speech;
For I have slain a man for my wound,
And a youth for my bruise:
24. Yet Cain shall be avenged sevenfold,
But Lamech seventy and sevenfold.

practical and mechanical improvements, whilst the son of the latter (Jubal) was the inventor of the adorning instruments of music. — Thus, we may, with due energy, strike the living water of thought even out of the apparently rocky soil of dry names.

Two verses (the 23rd and 24th) are inserted as a poetical episode which seems, both in its form, and in its contents, to be unconnected with the main thread of our historical narrative. But they are by no means so obscure as they have often been represented to be. Lamech had been either insidiously attacked or wantonly provoked by a young man; he had, in this involuntary encounter, even received a serious wound and other injury; he was, therefore, obliged to prepare himself for resistance; and in this act of legitimate self-defence he had the misfortune of killing his assailant. Lamech, though lamenting this melancholy issue, was conscious and certain of his innocence; and partly in order not to risk the affection of his wives if they should hear of this sanguinary deed, and partly in order to satisfy them that his personal safety stood in no danger from the avenger of blood, he informed them of the whole incident in a solemn address. Although he confessed the deed, he was sure that nobody could, with any legal or moral right, seek his life, since he had not offered but repelled violence. And in this fact consists the chief difference between his deed and that of Cain; for, the latter had maliciously and nefariously murdered a brother, incited by no other motive than vile jealousy. And yet had God guaranteed to Cain his life; He had set an awful curse upon any future aggressor; "whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold." Lamech, therefore, whom the duty of self-preservation had reluctantly forced to bloodshed, might be infinitely more satisfied that he had not forfeited his life; he was even confident, that he had committed no crime; and he could exclaim with emphasis: "If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold"; in which sentence the numbers are all expressive of intense and rigid punishment. It is obvious, that in this address of Lamech, a new political and social law of the greatest importance is proclaimed. The eastern custom of avenge of blood was often so sanguinary, as to cause endless persecution, hatred, and murder. Blind passion alone regulated the conduct; and base vindictiveness was hallowed with the virtuous names of affection and duty. At a later time, Moses restricted by a series of efficient laws, that pernicious custom within salutary limits; but already the history of Lamech teaches distinctly, that the avenging of blood must not be continued to an interminable extent; that a murder caused in the necessity of self-defence is not liable to the persecution of the blood-avenger; and that so far from this being an act of duty, honor, or justice, it is visited with the most rigorous Divine punishments. — This appears to us the general sense of these two verses; they are no fragment, but are complete and intelligible; they contain a clear and appropriate idea, in perfect harmony with the whole tenour of our chapter, which describes, in the form of a genealogical list, the gradual social progress of the human family.— And let us observe, in addition, that, whilst poetry is attributed to the father, the invention of music is ascribed to the son. Poetry and music are, in the ancient world, almost inseparable; but poetry is unques-

25. And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son, and called his name Seth: For God, *said she*, hath given me another seed instead of Abel; for Cain hath

tionably the more primitive and fundamental art; for, solemnity of disposition and emotion, or elevation of thought, lead naturally to poetical diction; it is even maintained, that all the first written compositions were in poetry, not in prose. Music formed, generally, but the accompaniment of poetry, enhancing the effect of its recital; the latter is not rarely identified with prophecy itself; it was considered as the effusion of direct inspiration; and even in the "singers" or "seers," the sublime contents and the poetical beauty of the words were of higher moment than the charm of the accompanying musical performance. Words convey ideas with greater distinctness and precision than the most descriptive music; and if those words are, besides, accompanied by the harmony of sounds, both the mind and the heart are touched and moved by an irresistible power.

25, 26. The history of Cain and his descendants is finished. It is never resumed in any later portion. The Cainites, though known to the Hebrews, did not enter into any internal connection with them; they were the nations of the distant East, famous by the mighty polities they formed, powerful by their inventions, and though disposed to deeds of sanguinary violence, yet not inaccessible to the softening influence of mental culture and civilisation. This narrative is clearly a continuation of the preceding chapters; for it contains both the progress of the human mind and of sin. But it introduces, also, the succeeding genealogy.

The premature death of Abel had thrown the first parents into grief and sadness; the circle which had just been formed was already broken; their habitation appeared to them desolate, and their hearts longed for those objects of love which they had so fondly cherished. For the murder of Abel had deprived them of both their children; Cain was not only removed from their vicinity, but he was alienated from their affections; they could not, with pleasure, think of the destroyer of a sacred life; nor could they, with satisfaction, represent to themselves the miserable life which his own guilt had prepared for him: all their sentiments were as painfully moved by the remembrance of their dead, as of their living son. But the Divine mercy compensated them for their loss, and consoled their affliction. Eve bore a son whom she called Seth for "God, *said she*, has given me another seed instead of Abel; for Cain slew him." This son became the ancestor of Noah, and, through him, of Abraham, and of the chosen people of Israel. On him and his progeny, therefore, the whole attention of the historian is henceforth concentrated; with him we approach nearer the immediate end and purport of the Pentateuch. And even the very first generation after him, gives a striking proof of the altered direction which the path of mankind then took. The son of Seth was Enos, and it is added, that in his time "men began to invoke the name of God." We cannot repress a feeling of astonishment, that these simple and clear words should have suffered so many forced and often most strange interpretations; since we need only take them in their obvious sense in order to arrive at a perfectly satisfactory idea. The first, and perhaps most material mode of Divine worship is by means of offerings and sacrifices. Kings were honoured with gifts; little cultivated nations naturally believed, therefore, that the King of kings would be pleased or propitiated by their most precious property. This feeling of devotion, loyalty, and self-denial, is certainly truly religious and commendable; it is a perfect justification for the offering of sacrifices, which, therefore, were even later not only maintained in the Mosaic legislation, but developed into a magnificent system. But God is a spirit; His worship is, therefore, the more

slain him. 26. And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then began *men* to invoke the name of the Lord.

perfect, the more it is internal and spiritual in character. The elevation of the heart to God, whether accompanied by offerings or not, is, therefore, a higher, and, no doubt, a more refined way of Divine adoration than the mere killing of animals, or the mere oblation of vegetable gifts. *Prayer*, in itself a noble mode of worship, enhances and dignifies the *sacrifices*. The first generation after Adam, represented by Cain and Abel, displayed its gratitude to God by offerings; the second manifested it by prayers; in the time of Seth, "men began to invoke the name of the Lord," either in private prayer or in public supplication. We are, thus, at once transported to another, and purer, sphere; we move in a more spiritual world; the descendants of Cain exercise their ingenuity by mechanical or social inventions of every kind; they try either to facilitate or to adorn the external life: the first descendant of Seth advances a decided and a bold step towards the realm of spirituality; his thoughts are directed to the inner man, and to internal life; he is destined to be the ancestor of the propagators of religious truth; and he hastens to open the portals of the purest religion.

CHAPTER V.

SUMMARY.—The descendants of Adam, who represent the ten successive generations down to Noah, are enumerated with some prominent chronological dates regarding the history of their lives. Adam was created in the image of God, which was inherited by his progeny (vers. 1—8). But as the numbers given in the Samaritan text and the Greek translation do not agree with those stated in the Hebrew original, we subjoin a tabular view of their various statements, but add distinctly that both the Samaritan and Greek variations contain internal evidence of being systematic corruptions of the Hebrew text.

PATRIARCHS.	HEBREW TEXT.			SAMARITAN TEXT.			SEPTUAGINT VERS.		
	Years before birth of son.	Rest of life.	Extent of whole life.	Years before birth of son.	Rest of life.	Extent of whole life.	Years before birth of son.	Rest of life.	Extent of whole life.
1. Adam	130	800	930	130	800	930	230	700	930
2. Seth	105	807	912	105	807	912	205	707	912
3. Enos.....	90	815	905	90	815	905	190	715	905
4. Cainan.....	70	840	910	70	840	910	170	740	910
5. Mahalaleel....	65	830	895	65	830	895	165	730	895
6. Jared	162	800	962	62	785	847	162	800	962
7. Enoch	65	300	365	65	300	365	165	200	365
8. Methuselah ..	187	782	969	67	653	720	187	782	969
9. Lamech	182	595	777	53	600	653	188	565	753
10. Noah.....	500	—	950	500	—	950	500	—	950

1. This is the book of the generations of man. When God created man, He made him in the likeness of God;

1—20. The creation of heaven and earth has been described; man, the ruler of the earth, had rapidly passed through the paradise of childhood; his happiness vanished with his innocence; sin engendered death, and death matured murder; the earth had been cursed by God, and defiled by man with fraternal blood; sin

2. Male and female created He them, and blessed them, and called their name man, when they were created.— 3. And Adam lived a hundred and thirty years, and he begat *a son* in his own likeness, after his own image; and called his name Seth: 4. And the days of Adam, after he had begotten Seth, were eight hundred years: and he

had made gigantic strides among the generations of man; but the corruption of the heart did not long fetter the activity of the mind; manifold inventions were made; great and extensive tribes settled in the vast tracts of eastern Asia; they filled the earth with the din and tumult of their arms; whilst they endeavoured to soften the stern reality of life by the arts which please, and the accomplishments which adorn. But who occupied the west? How were the nations which inhabited the more central parts of the ancient world connected with the first parents of mankind? This question was of the greatest practical importance; it was of immediate interest; for it implied the origin and infancy of the holy nation itself; it approaches nearer to the end and purport of Biblical history; it introduces that for which the whole preceding narrative was inserted. And this question is treated in the portion to which we now advance. Biblical historiography is truly pragmatical; it is nowhere abrupt; it deduces the single facts organically from their higher source; but whilst it is grand and rapid in its outlines, it is minute in its details; the execution is as careful as the conception is lofty; genius and industry are surprisingly blended; and if, sometimes, an individual trait seems to disturb the harmony of the whole, a more careful inspection will show that harmony in still stronger light. The chronological list contained in our chapter specifies the generations between Adam and Noah, between the first and the second father of the human families; between the unconscious innocence of infancy, and the self-acquired intellectual righteousness of manhood (vi. 9; vii. 1); between the creation of the earth, and its all but total destruction; between the Divine love which called man into existence, and the Divine justice which, with grief and reluctance, was compelled to annihilate him (vi. 6, 13). This list comprises, therefore, all the outlines of the possible history of the earth, and of man; it includes a perfect cycle of events, partly returning to the beginning, and partly commencing a new era; it is, therefore, a complete whole; and, hence, the number of the generations is that of *completeness*; TEN bears throughout the Old Testament this character of entireness and perfection; the Ten Commandments are the complete code of fundamental laws; and the ten plagues inflicted upon Pharaoh represent the idea, that all the terrors of nature were exhausted against the refractory tyrant. Thus, the *ten* generations are perfectly Biblical; even later, the same notions were entertained; the book of Enoch knows ten periods of the world, and the Cabbalists ten Sephiroth or emanations which complete the idea of the Divine nature. It is scarcely necessary to recur to the numerous analogies among other eastern traditions, although they assist and confirm the Biblical narrative; but we may add, that the Hindoos believed in ten great saints, or maharshis, the offspring of Manu, and in ten different personifications of the god Vishnu; that the Egyptians knew ten mighty heroes, the Chaldeans ten kings before the flood, and the Assyrians ten kings from Ham to Ninyas, and as many from Japhet to Aram; and that the Book of Enoch enumerates ten periods, each comprising seven generations, from Adam to the Messiah. In this, as in all similar instances, the facts borrowed from general current traditions were, by the Hebrew writer, organically embodied in his own original system; in

begat sons and daughters: 5. And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died.—6. And Seth lived a hundred and five years, and begat Enos: 7. And Seth lived after he begat Enos eight hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters: 8. And all the days of Seth were nine

his hands they were purified from the alloy of their primitive character; and they lost the trace of their origin.

But a systematic order, similar to that represented by *ten* generations between Adam and Noah, is discoverable in the list of the Cainites also; it embodies, also, an idea of the highest interest and moment, an idea which alone throws a proper light upon the genealogy of the Sethites, and which explains the fact of the two lists succeeding each order. From Adam to Lamech, the Cainite, are seven generations, which, with his three sons, Jabal, Jubal, and Tubal-cain, make the number of ten names in that list also. We need not to remind our readers of the significance of the number seven. But, whilst ten signifies completeness, seven typifies the *striving* after perfection; ten is, therefore, used whenever *God* acts, whilst seven is applied when *man* endeavours to perform holy deeds; God created the world by ten commands, as even the Rabbins deduced from the first chapter, whilst all the festivals, that is, the days of mental elevation *on the part of man*, are connected with the number seven; except the holiest of all, the day of atonement, which is on the *tenth* day of the *seventh* month, thus combining the human craving with the Divine mercy which graciously satisfies it: ten symbolizes the descending of God to man; seven denotes the aspiration of man up to God; the former number represents, therefore, *revelation*, the latter natural *piety*; and, whilst ten bears, in Mosaism exclusively, the highest character of sanctity, seven is the common sacred number of most of the other religions. This obvious and striking difference between the numbers seven and ten, will be more fully explained in its due place; it receives, however, a full corroboration from the two genealogical lists, the examination of which has given rise to these remarks. The seven generations from Adam to Cain arrived, by their own human exertions, at *beauty*; the ten generations from Adam to Noah reached, with the aid of Divine guidance, to *truth*; the Cainites rose to the cultivation of *art*; the Sethites proceeded to the knowledge and practice of *religion*; human reason and energy, so teaches the Bible, may be able to facilitate our external existence; but it is by Divine assistance alone, that the internal life of man can be reformed and humanized; the Cainites remained idolaters and heathens, in spite of their artistic refinement; the Sethites became, according to the Pentateuch, the possessors and guardians of a pure monotheism by their immediate connection with God. According to the Biblical notions, it is impossible for the unaided human mind to ascend higher than to the cultivation of the arts; when, therefore, the Cainites had reached this aim, they had completed the possible circle of their activity; they had fulfilled their mission; and no further stage of development was left to them. They were, therefore, swept away by the deluge; no member of their race was spared to hand down the experience they had gathered to future generations, because no new element of importance could be added. But Noah, the descendant of the truth-seeking, religious, divinely assisted race, was rescued in the general destruction, to become the ancestor of Abraham, and of the favoured people destined to receive and to spread the full knowledge of God. Thus, the double list is not only justified, but includes ideas in every respect worthy of the great historian's wisdom.

hundred and twelve years: and he died.—9. And Enos lived ninety years, and begat Cainan: 10. And Enos lived after he begat Cainan eight hundred and fifteen years, and begat sons and daughters: 11. And all the days of Enos were nine hundred and five years: and he died.—12. And Cainan lived seventy years, and begat Mahalaleel: 13. And Cainan lived after he begat Maha-

But with regard to the chronological statements of our chapter, there remains a question to be discussed, which has often been disputed with a zeal exceeding even its importance; namely, about the extraordinary ages of the patriarchs. Adam was 130 years old when his son Seth was born; he lived after his birth 800 years more; he attained, therefore, the marvellous age of 930 years. A similar longevity is ascribed, with one exception, to the other members of this genealogy, and Methuselah is stated to have reached the age of 969 years. It is well known, how many and how arbitrary expedients have been resorted to for the explanation of this vitality, incomprehensible in our ages. Josephus, who, in more than one passage, attempts rationalistic explanations of miracles, defends here the literal acceptation of the Scriptural text; he considers these high numbers as perfectly correct; the patriarchs, he says, were beloved by God; man, but lately formed by the Divine hands, was more vigorous in strength; his food was more appropriate; God granted him a longer life on account of his virtue; He wished to enable him to make astronomical and geometrical discoveries; for the Great Year is completed in six hundred years; He afforded him, therefore, a life extending, at least, to this duration; and, besides, there is the testimony of many ancient writers, who all relate, that men lived a thousand years; and although Josephus concludes with the ambiguous words: "but as to these matters, let every one look upon them as he thinks fit"; it is certain that he regarded those numbers as historical; and that, in his opinion, a long life was a particular favour of God granted to the earlier generations for their greater piety. But this view, which is at present chiefly prevalent among critics, is not in harmony with the Biblical narrative. These generations were by no means distinguished for their piety; on the contrary, their iniquity rendered the destruction of the whole human race indispensable, with one solitary exception. We attempt, therefore, another explanation.

Man was originally intended for an immortal existence; sin brought death upon him; every progress in the career of sin caused a new reduction in the years of his life; toil increased, and the years were again curtailed; the greater the interval which separated man from the happy days of Paradise, the shorter grew his life, till it was at last contracted to its present narrow limits, and became comparable to the "shadow that passes," the "cloud that vanishes," or "the dream that disappears." The unbounded strength with which the nature of man was originally furnished, and which made unending life a physical possibility, gradually exhausted itself; the next generation inherited but a part of the paternal vigour; the heroic forms and the iron limbs of the ancestors were thus imperceptibly weakened, till they reached that transitory condition the origin of which is by the Bible ascribed to the sin of man. Thus Noah reached an age of 950 years; Abraham of 175; Jacob lived 147 years; Moses, 120; Joshua, 110; whilst David was decrepit in his seventieth year; and the Psalmist represents the usual extent of life as seventy years, and one of eighty as a rare and exceptional occurrence (Ps. xc. 10). Only when a new heaven and a new earth will be created, when

laleel eight hundred and forty years, and begat sons and daughters: 14. And all the days of Cainan were nine hundred and ten years: and he died.—15. And Mahalaleel lived sixty-five years, and begat Jared: 16. And Mahalaleel lived after he begat Jared eight hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters: 17. And all the days of Mahalaleel were eight hundred and ninety-five

nature will be entirely regenerated, the life of man will again be prolonged; a death at the age of a hundred years will be considered the death of a youth; the human frame, though not destined to regain immortality, will receive back its pristine strength; for sin and rapine will cease, and a state very similar to the happiness of Paradise will be restored (Isai. lxv.17—25). Another circumstance compels us to renounce the explanation, that, as those early generations were regarded as more pious and more favoured by God, a longer life was attributed to them. We have shown by several instances, that a long life was, in itself, deemed neither a happiness nor a mark of Divine favour. This might have been a common prejudice and mistake among the Hebrews; but the wise author of the Pentateuch did not share it; he endeavoured to correct it by repeated allusions; it is manifestly disregarded in the long life of the wicked Cain, and the short existence of the pious Abel; and the genealogy of this chapter contains a still more striking instance, which removes every doubt. Enoch walked with God; he was, among all the Sethites before Noah, the most virtuous, the most upright man; he was the especial favourite of God; and he was ordained to leave this earth when he had scarcely completed half the number of years allotted to his less meritorious, less beloved kinsmen. We must, therefore, acquit the Bible of those external notions of happiness which have been too long unjustly imputed to it; it is true, that "the fear of God increases the days" (Prov. x. 27; Exod. xx. 12); but this prolongation is, in fact, desirable only in so far as it is accompanied with "fear of God": it is true that "the years of the sinner are shortened"; but this brevity of life is a curse only when it is the effect and punishment of wickedness; longevity with crime is a still greater punishment, whilst paucity of years with virtue may be the lot of those upon whom God would bestow His best and choicest rewards. It may also have been a far-spread prejudice, that a sudden death is a sign of Divine anger, and a fearful visitation (Ps. xxxvii. 36); but this error is combated by the sudden disappearance of the pious and God-favoured Enoch. And both doctrines are expressly enjoined in the Book of Wisdom, with immediate reference to the example of Enoch: "The righteous, even if he dies early, is in peace. For a happy old age is not measured by the number of years, but by a spotless life. Because Enoch loved God, He took him away, for he lived among sinners, lest malice should pervert his mind, or falsehood stain his soul" (iv.7—15). The insertion of the history and destiny of Enoch is, therefore, alone sufficient to destroy the supposition, that the Hebrew historian, in stating those high numbers, merely copied the fabulous traditions of other ancient nations, which ascribe to the earlier and happier generations, among other great blessings and privileges, the high boon of a very extended life. And although Josephus, in the passage above quoted, speaks of persons reported to have lived a thousand years; although Hesiod and Diodorus Siculus, Herodotus and Pliny, have made similar statements; although, according to the Lamaic creed, the first men lived 60,000 years; and although the Indian traditions, those most important analogies for Bib-

years: and he died. — 18. And Jared lived a hundred and sixty-two years, and he begat Enoch: 19. And Jared lived after he begat Enoch eight hundred years,

lical antiquities, speak of four epochs, during which the extent of human life gradually sank from 400 to 100 years (see p. 64): the resemblance of the Hebrew narrative to these legends is merely an external one; the fact is partially retained, but the explanation is completely changed; the highest bliss is, with the Hebrew writer, not worldly enjoyment, but a spiritual life in God; the aim of human existence is perfectly different; not the duration, but the holiness of life is of essential import: time thus becomes a mere vessel, indifferent in itself, and deriving its value only from the contents with which it is filled by the conduct of man. And thus we naturally arrive at the only possible explanation of the longevity of the patriarchs; we find ourselves again in the same sphere and circle of notions, into which we were brought by the creation of the six days, by the seduction of the serpent, by the forbidden tree, and the loss of Paradise; we have here, also, a common Oriental, or rather ancient tradition, received by the Hebrew writer, as it would, indeed, have been impossible to ignore or to repudiate it, but ennobled and purified by him, and endowed with a new idea, of the highest moral and practical interest.

We trust, therefore, that it will suffice briefly to allude to the former opinions on this question of patriarchal longevity; namely, that the atmosphere was, in the times before the flood, more salubrious (at present, even under every the most favourable circumstance of climate, health, and mode of life, an age above 200 years is declared by physiologists a physical impossibility); or, that every name represents a whole tribe, and the number comprises all its ramifications; or, that the years mean only months; or, that from Adam to Abraham the year had three months, from Abraham to Joseph eight, and from Joseph's time only twelve months; or, that several generations have been omitted in our list, and that yet the number of years was attributed to the remaining few. These and several other still more hazardous conjectures are mere inventions without any fact or argument to support them; they either suppose a vast corruption of the Hebrew text merely for the sake of proving a pre-conceived theory; or they force upon the words fictitious significations; or they create even greater difficulties than those which they intend to remove; as, for instance, Enoch would have been taken to heaven *with his whole family*; or, Cainan would have become a father at the age of six, and Enoch of about five years, supposing the years were months.

21—24. The six generations from Seth to Jared are rapidly passed over; they comprise a period of nearly seven hundred years; during this time, the human family grew in numbers and in sin; in the generation of Seth, the name of God was invoked in prayer (iv. 26); but it was forgotten and profaned in the increase of toil; wickedness and violence began to fill the earth; and piety was a stranger in the turbulence of passion. In such an epoch, and among such men, Enoch was born, "the seventh from Adam." His mind was pure; his spirit rose above the turmoil of worldliness; he delighted in calm communion with God; once more the familiar intercourse between God and man, which had existed in the time of Paradise, was restored; the path commenced by Seth was continued by Enoch; the former addressed God by the medium of the *word*; the latter approached Him by the still more spiritual medium of *thought*: the highest form of religious life was gained: but, unfortunately, Enoch alone "walked with God"; his contemporaries were sunk in iniquity and depravation; but the measure of their wickedness was not yet complete: three generations more were required to mature their destruction; and

and begat sons and daughters: 20. And all the days of Jared were nine hundred and sixty-two years: and he died.—21. And Enoch lived sixty-five years, and begat

God, in order to rescue Enoch, took him to Himself, delivering him from the contamination of his time at a comparatively early period of his life. Was this early death a punishment? But the piety of Enoch is repeatedly stated. Was it a misfortune? It was this as little, as the full length of Noah's life; both cases were analogous; in the one, the pious man left the wicked generation; in the other, he was, by a catastrophe, freed from it; and in both instances, the deliverance was miraculous and supernatural, by the immediate agency of God. If this is the clear internal meaning of Enoch's history, who can doubt that he was called away from the earth, not to cease his life abruptly, but to continue it in a better sphere, and in still more perfect virtue? We are convinced, that the "taking away" of Enoch is one of the strongest proofs of the belief in a future state prevailing among the Hebrews; without this belief, the history of Enoch is a perfect mystery, a hieroglyph without a clue, a commencement without an end. If, then, pious men could hope to continue a brighter existence after their transitory sojourn upon earth, the books of the Old Testament are not enveloped in the gloomy clouds of despair; they radiate in the beams of hope; and, if a long life on earth was also gratefully accepted as a high, though not the highest, boon, this may have sprung from the just feeling, that man is born to enjoy and to work, to receive much and to give more; and that he does not deserve the blessing of eternal rest before he has toiled to extend the empire of truth and piety (comp. Sap. iv. 7—10).

God "took Enoch," as He "took" Elijah (2 Kings ii. 9), or, "he was translated by faith, that he should not see death, and was not found, because God had translated him" (Hebr. xi. 5). The notion seems to be, that Enoch passed from earth to heaven without the intermediate state of decrepitude and dissolution; he suffered no bodily infirmity; "his eye grew not dim, nor did his natural strength abate," as it is stated with regard to Moses, who also disappeared so that no mortal knew his grave. For the pious Enoch, death lost its pang and its sting; though the descendant of a sinful race, he was delivered from the real punishment which sin inflicted upon the human family; his existence was uninterrupted; he was undying, as man was originally intended to be; for he passed from this life into a future state, both without fear, and without struggle. God took him as a loving father to His eternal home. The history of Enoch has ever been regarded as embodying profound truths; and, we think, there are few so strongly affecting the very root of religious life as those which we have just briefly indicated. And, as the virtuous are thus translated into *heaven*, the wicked are devoured alive in the gulf of the *earth* (Num. xvi.). It is known, that the classical writers also mention such translations into heaven; they assign this distinction among others to Hercules, to Ganymede, and to Romulus. But it was awarded to them either for their valour, or for mere physical beauty, which advantages, though valued among the Hebrews, were not considered by them as sublime or godlike; a pious and religious life alone deserved and obtained the crown of immortal glory. In no single feature can the Scriptures conceal their high spiritual character. However, the idea of a translation to heaven is not limited to the old world; it was familiar to the tribes of Central America; the chronicles of Guatemala record four progenitors of mankind who were suddenly raised to heaven; and the documents add, that those first men came to Guatemala from the other side of the sea, from the east. This is, then, apparently, a rather remarkable connection of the primitive traditions of the most different nations. These chronicles also contain a history of the creation,

Methuselah: 22. And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons

which, though replete with pagan elements, and disfigured by more than one grossly extravagant notion, is, at least, a thoughtful attempt at solving the mystery of the genesis of the universe.

Later legends have busily adorned and amplified the history of Enoch; an apocryphal book, probably composed about a hundred years before Christ, and from which St. Jude quotes (vers. 14, 15), was ascribed to him, or rather written under his name; this production collected and arranged all the traditions which the lapse of time had accumulated about that extraordinary man; he foresaw, in a prophetic vision, the destruction of the human race by the deluge; he exhorted his son Methuselah, and all his contemporaries, to reform their evil ways; but he penetrated with his prophetic eye into the remotest future; he delineated the ten periods of the world from Adam down to the time of the Messiah; he explored all the mysteries of the earth and of the heavens; angels guided him, and taught his eager spirit every hidden knowledge, which he revealed to mankind to strengthen it in faith and hope; he explored also the secret working of nature, and the marvels of the celestial orbs, and he deduced therefrom new doctrines regarding the wisdom and grandeur of God; after the birth of his eldest son, he passed a retired life in intercourse with the angels, and in meditation on Divine matters; and, while he had before received revelations in dreams or visions only, like other prophets, he was henceforth in immediate connection with the world of spirits, till he was translated to heaven, in order to reappear in the time of the Messiah, leaving behind him a number of writings on subjects of morality and religious truth. Enoch is, therefore, the great teacher; he is the "scribe," or the "scribe of justice"; he pointed out the way of virtue, both by his word, and his writings; he was the inventor of letters, and the protector of all sciences.

But the legends did not stop here; they developed the old traditions more and more; the Book of Jubilees relates, that he was carried into Paradise, where he writes down the judgment of all men, their wickedness, and eternal punishment; and Rabbinical authors give him, not only the rank of the great scribe of God, but they assert that he promulgated during his life many important laws which he had read in the heavenly books, and which were afterwards embodied in the Law of Moses. Even Arabic writers have treated of Enoch's history; Elmacin ascribes to him a code of laws; and Beidhawi speaks of thirty books which God had sent down to him from heaven.

All these traditions are a proof of the reverence with which the person of Enoch was regarded to the latest times; but not less remarkable than his person is the book which bears his name; it is of peculiar importance; it embodies several of the leading ideas of the New Testament in a most distinct manner, and forms a welcome historical link between the other apocryphal works and the writings of the apostles. The book of Enoch insists, with the earnestness of the old prophets, upon the renewal and restoration of the pure *Biblical* faith; it combats with equal energy against the corruptions of Rabbinical interpretation, and the inroads of Greek philosophy — against superstition and paganism; the author deduces all his truths from no other source but the written holy books, and rejects traditional exaggerations and embellishments; he gives enthusiastic descriptions of the world of angels; he delineates their respective rank and glory; he introduces men into the abode of these pure spirits, and elevates them to their light, and peace, and wisdom; he furnishes the most copious and most detailed descriptions of the future life in such completeness, that no later time has been able to enlarge them; he gives a clear picture of the Sheol, its

and daughters: 23. And all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years: 24. And Enoch

different divisions, and the preliminary judgment there held—of the hell (gehenna), where the wicked are doomed to receive their punishment — of the place where the fallen angels and contumacious powers of nature are fettered; he describes, in full outlines, the resurrection of the dead, and the Messianic judgment over the dead and the living. But one of the most remarkable features of the book of Enoch is its very elaborate and clear description of the person and the times of the Messiah. It does not only comprise the scattered allusions of the Old Testament in one grand picture of unspeakable bliss, unalloyed virtue, and unlimited knowledge; it represents the Messiah not only as the King, but the Judge of the world, who has the decision over everything on earth and in heaven; for the Messiah is "the Son of man, who possesses justice, since the God of all spirits has elected him, and since he has conquered all by justice in eternity"; but he is also the "Son of God," the Elected One, the Prince of Justice; he is gifted with that wisdom which knows all secret things; the spirit in all its fulness is poured out on him; his glory lasts to all eternity; he shares the throne of God's majesty; kings and princes will worship him, and invoke his mercy; he pre-existed before all time; "before the sun and the signs were made, and the stars of heaven were created, his name was already proclaimed before the Lord of all spirits"; "before the creation of the world he was elected"; and, although still unknown to the children of the world, he is already revealed to the pious by prophecy, and is praised by the angels in heaven. Even the dogma of the Trinity is implied in the book; it is formed by the Lord of the spirits, the Elected, and the Divine power; they partake both of the name and of the omnipotence of God. The doctrine of incarnation alone was reserved for the New Testament, as the last completion of the Messianic notions. It is, for the present purpose, unnecessary to enter into the component parts of the book, and to enquire into the age when each was written. On these points, there exists a vast difference of opinion, the discussion of which lies entirely beyond the limits of this volume. But thus much we may observe, as an indisputable fact, that the book of Enoch, in its present form, was composed *before* the canon of the New Testament; and that its chief portions, at least, were written *by a Jew of Palestine, in the Hebrew language, more than a hundred years before the birth of Christ.* We may add, with regard to the history of this extraordinary book, that, when it appeared, it was evidently received and read with eager interest; that it was soon translated into Greek, and from this language into the Ethiopian dialect; that not only the later apocryphal writings, as, for instance, the Book of the Jubilees, and the "Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs," but most of the Fathers of the Church, down to the time of Augustin and Jerome, used and quoted it; that, however, from this period, it fell into almost entire oblivion, and was, with the exception of a few fragments of the learned monk Syncellus, at the end of the eighth century, and some allusions in Rabbinical writers, totally forgotten; the manuscript which Augustus Mai deposited in the library of the Vatican remained unnoticed; but the celebrated traveller, James Bruce, brought, in 1773, three copies of the Ethiopian version to Europe; and since this time several translations and valuable commentaries have been published. This remarkable apocryphal production, which, if we are not mistaken, will one day be employed as a most important witness in the history of religious dogmas, deserves the most careful study, and it is accessible to the English reader in the editions of

walked with God: and he *was* no more, for God had taken him away. — 25. And Methuselah lived a hundred and eighty-seven years, and begat Lamech: 26. And Methuselah lived after he begat Lamech seven hundred and eighty-two years, and begat sons and daughters: 27. And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred and sixty-nine years: and he died. — 28. And Lamech lived a hundred and eighty-two years, and begat a son: 29. And

Bishop Lawrence, whose interesting "Preliminary Dissertation" commands especial attention.

25—27. To Enoch, the pious, was allotted the shortest life; to his son, Methuselah, the longest. The latter reached the high age of 969 years; he exceeded even the duration of Adam's life, who died 930 years old; he seems not only to have renewed, but considerably surpassed the primeval strength granted to man;—does he then, indeed, mark a retrogression in the history of the human generations? But Methuselah's longevity seems intended as a compensation for Enoch's short life: even if the pious leaves this world early, his race flourishes; his name lives in his progeny; his example ennobles and guides their conduct,—but although his righteousness spreads blessings over thousands after him, it is, of itself and unaccompanied by the piety of the descendants, unable to avert or to retard their doom. Such is the Biblical doctrine; and this important truth is, in more than one instance, enforced in the history of the earliest patriarchs.

28—31. Noah, the tenth descendant from Adam, was destined to form a very important link in the chain of successive generations, to commence a new era in the history of sin, and to modify essentially the relation between God and man. It is, therefore, natural that his very birth should be introduced with a certain emphasis; that he should receive a significant name; and his name, even, be expressive of his future mission on earth. Lamech begat a son (ver. 28), and he called him Noah exclaiming: "This one shall comfort us from our labour, and from the toil of our hands; from the earth which the Lord hath cursed." The name of Noah, then, implies a prophetic anticipation; it refers to a characteristic crisis in his subsequent life; and its explanation must, therefore, be sought in a later event. And the circumstance to which it alludes cannot be doubtful, although many strange opinions have been advanced. The produce of the earth had been assigned to man as his only food (i. 29). But the earth was laden with the curse of the Divine anger (iii. 17—19). Man was doomed to force, with "labour and with toil," a scanty sustenance from the barren and stubborn soil. His life was one of perpetual struggle, of incessant anxiety. In the time of Noah he was, in a great measure, relieved from this curse of the earth, for God permitted him to eat the flesh of animals also (ix. 3). He was no more entirely dependent on the uncertainty of the skies, or the "strength" of the earth; he found *rest* from the uninterrupted fatigues of agriculture, and was partially *consoled* for the Divine curse which was inflicted on the earth. We find, therefore, in the very name of Noah an indication of a grand and fundamental change which concerned the whole human race, and which we shall more fully develop in the ensuing chapters. And thus only we can understand why the father said, "this one will comfort US from OUR labour." Not Lamech, but all the future generations, enjoyed the relief granted to his son Noah.

32. When Noah was five hundred years old, he had three sons, Shem, Ham.

he called his name Noah, saying, This *one* will relieve us from our work and the toil of our hands, from the ground which the Lord hath cursed. 30. And Lamech lived after he begat Noah five hundred and ninety-five years, and begat sons and daughters: 31. And all the days of Lamech were seven hundred and seventy-seven years: and he died. 32. And Noah was five hundred years old: and Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

and Japheth; they are all mentioned, not the eldest son alone, as in the other generations, because they became individually the ancestors of many important nations; they are the regenerators of the human race, when its destruction had become indispensable; their names alone are sufficient to prepare us for the extraordinary incidents that follow; and to indicate that the calm genealogical narrative is interrupted, and that events of universal interest and importance will be disclosed.

IV.—THE DELUGE.

Chapters VI. to IX.

Summary.—When the human families had vastly increased upon the earth, they sank into wickedness and crime, still more enhanced by the "sons of God," who associated themselves with the daughters of man (vi. 1—4). God resolved, therefore, to exterminate every living being from the earth, and to save Noah alone, who had remained in the path of piety (vi. 5—8). Once more is the fearful depravity of man described; and God announces to Noah the approach of an all-destroying deluge. He ordered him to build an ark of huge dimensions, for himself, his wife, his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and their wives, and for one pair of every living creature (except the fishes), which were to be preserved alive, and to gather food for all this immense number of animals. Noah executed the Divine commands (vi. 9—22); he was then ordered to enter the ark; but his former instructions were so modified, that he was to take with him seven pairs of every clean species of animals, and one pair of every unclean species (vii. 1—5). In the six hundredth year of Noah's life the flood began; the fountains of the deep and the flood-gates of heaven were opened; forty days and forty nights the waters continued to break forth upon the earth; the waves rose fifteen cubits above the peaks of the highest mountains; every living soul expired on the earth; the ark and its inmates alone were safely carried along the flood; and after the end of one hundred and fifty days, the waters decreased, and the ark rested over the mountains of Ararat (vii. 6—viii. 5). The floods gradually retired; the tops of the mountains became visible; Noah sent out first a raven, then a dove, to learn the state of the earth; the second time the dove returned with a fresh olive-leaf in her mouth, and the third time she returned no more. After a complete year and ten days, the earth was again perfectly dry (viii. 6—14). By the command of God, Noah left the ark, with all living beings that were with him. God blessed the animals; and Noah, to show his gratitude, built an altar, and offered a grand sacrifice to God, who graciously promised to send no other deluge to destroy the earth, and to look with mercy upon the weakness of the human mind (viii. 15—22). God renewed the dominion of man over the brute creation; permitted him, also,

the flesh of the animals, but interdicted their blood, which is their soul. Murder committed against a fellow-man was to be punished with death (ix. 1—7). He concluded a perpetual covenant with man and all living creatures; and appointed the rainbow as the sign of this covenant of peace and reconciliation (ix. 8—18).—Noah began now again to cultivate the ground; he planted a vineyard; and when he once was in a state of intoxication, his youngest son, Ham, committed an act of disrespect and indecency, for which he and his son Canaan were laden with the curse of servitude; whilst his two elder brothers, Shem and Japheth, who had shown due filial reverence, received the richest blessings as the future masters of Ham (ix. 19—27).—Three hundred and fifty years after the deluge, in the nine hundred and fiftieth year of his life, Noah died (ix. 28, 29).

CHAPTER VI.

1. And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them,

1—8. Universal history describes the progress of polities, and the relation between nation and nation; Biblical history teaches chiefly the internal progress of the individual, and the relation between God and the nations of the earth; the former deduces all events from human agencies; the latter traces them to Divine interposition; the former is pragmatical if it demonstrates cause and effect, or means and end, in the external events; the latter, if it deduces the events from causes connected with the internal life; the end of the former is instruction by experience; the aim of the latter, reformation by truth; in the former, the facts are individual; in the latter, they conceal a general idea. Results not produced by human efforts find no place in the former; and all that has no reference to the Divine sovereignty has no place in the latter. The powers and terrors of nature, therefore, are of very subordinate moment in universal history; but they are regarded as most significant Divine instruments in the Biblical narrative; the former records them only in so far as they affect or change the material condition of countries or nations; the latter uses them to illustrate the supreme doctrine of the just providence of God. Now, there exist numerous traditions of a deluge among most of the ancient nations, as we shall specify in its due place; but they are but imperfectly alluded to in the earlier historical works; whilst the Pentateuch treats them with evident care; it dwells upon the history of the deluge with a minuteness which indicates its importance; and it unfolds a picture at once interesting and instructive, elaborate and powerful. In reading, therefore, the eventful life of Noah, our principal attention must be directed to the spiritual lessons it contains; to the progress which it delineates with regard to the relation between God and mankind, and with regard to the religious aspirations of the human mind. We shall find our narrative of the utmost interest with reference to these momentous points; it will allow us a deeper insight into the history of salvation than was opened to us even by the preceding remarkable portions; and these sublime and exclusively Biblical ideas will, we hope, relieve us from all pusillanimous apprehensions if we find, that the Mosaic deluge resembles, *in the form*, many similar Eastern narratives; that it shares with them even many prominent details; and that, indeed, the *material* of this portion also was the common property of all Eastern literatures.

The very commencement of the narrative contains a notion, which cannot be explained from the Bible, but which is indisputably borrowed from foreign, heathen sources. The "sons of God" descended to the beautiful "daughters of man." They deserted their pure and ethereal

2. That the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they *were* beautiful; and they took for themselves wives of all whom they chose. 3. And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always preside in man, while he *is* also flesh:

nature, and abandoned themselves to despicable depravities; they left the heaven, in order to corrupt the earth and themselves; and it is but natural, that their wicked sons, excluded from the abodes in heaven which their fathers had enjoyed, should attempt to force access to it by a desperate and flagitious assault. This is the story of the Titans storming the heavens; it is a tradition which recurs, in many modified forms, among most of the ancient nations; the giants are, in the mythology of the Hindoos, the enemies of the gods who pollute the holiest sacrifices; some are a sort of wild beasts, or of vampires, eager for blood and human flesh, haunting the forests and the cemeteries; pious hermits are incessantly compelled to invoke against them the assistance of intrepid heroes; they belong to the highest order of the beings of darkness; their number is incalculable; and, as the soul of a criminal is frequently condemned to enter the body of a giant, they will always exist in undiminished numbers. In the mythology of the Chinese, the giants are the originators of crime and rebellion, who long waged a successful war against the virtuous kings; and in the northern and western legends, they are enormous beings, with the power, and sometimes the disposition, of doing mischief. We need not say, that all these traditions concerning the giants are fabulous; Strabo already ridiculed the fictions of strange creatures mentioned by older writers, of persons with long heads, with one eye, or with their eyes in their breasts; or of beings half men, half dogs; men of such extraordinary size seem never to have lived; the human race has remained essentially the same in its physical proportions ever since the historical time; the large bones which have occasionally been found, as, for instance, the skeleton of a head twelve palms in circumference (discovered in Africa in 1559), or the tooth "as big as a fist" (found in Mexico in 1586), are the remains of huge antediluvian animals, not of human beings; and the men who have been mentioned in history for their size, as being eight or nine feet high, as Gabbaras, in the reign of Claudius, or the emperor Maximinus, and the cases which Pliny adduces (vii. 16), are as rare exceptions as the men "with six fingers on every hand, and with six toes on every foot" (2 Sam. xxi. 20), and are no proof of a time when whole races of such men existed. How, then, are we to understand the Biblical narrative under consideration? Who are the "sons of God"? When were they called into existence, and for what purpose? We have seen, that they are nowhere introduced in the history of the creation; were they, then, a later thought of the Divine Framer, after "the heaven and the earth and all their hosts were finished"? And, if they are "sons of God," have they carnal desires? Are the angels subject to all the deplorable aberrations of human nature? Although God finds offence even in His angels (Job iv. 18), they are always, in purity, infinitely superior to man. The "sons of God" cannot, therefore, here be identical with the angels, or the sons of God mentioned in other parts of the Scriptures; they are not of Hebrew, but of general Eastern origin. And these notions were gradually more and more amplified; they were enlarged from other heathen sources, or from the fictions of imagination; and the Book of Enoch already shows, that the chief of these sons of heaven, Semjaza, at first opposed their wicked design; but they pledged themselves by awful oaths and imprecations to execute it; they descended, two hundred in number, to mount Hermon; they chose wives; taught them sorcery and conjuration; introduced ornaments of vanity and luxury, bracelets and trinkets,

but his days shall be a hundred and twenty years. 4. The giants were on the earth in those days; and also afterwards, when the sons of God came to the daughters of men, they bore *children* to them: these *are* the heroes who *were* of old men of renown.—5. And God saw that

paints and costly stuffs; giants, three thousand cubits high, were the offspring of these alliances; they first consumed all the produce of the earth; then they devoured all the animals, and afterwards began to turn against the men; the cries of the earth rose up to heaven; the angels Michael and Gabriel, Surjan and Urgan brought the complaint before the throne of God; He precipitated Azazel, the most wicked of the "sons of God," into a dark cavern, where he lies in fetters, and covered with rough pointed stones, in order to be thrown into the burning pool on the great day of judgment. He inspired the progeny of these unnatural unions with fierce rage; and the consequence was, that they destroyed each other in mutual murder, after which they were tied to subterranean hills to remain there for seventy generations, and then to be for ever hurled into the fiery abyss: but He assured the son of Lamech, that an approaching deluge would spare him and his children to become the ancestors of better generations.

Who recognizes in these fables the spirit of the Old Testament? And yet, they develop only the statement concerning the sons of God, who took the beautiful daughters of men to wives, and begat the giants (ver. 4). Do they not rather remind us of the Persian myths, which relate, that Ahriman and his evil spirits entered the creation, mixed with it, and corrupted its purity; that they defiled nature, deformed its beauty, and debased its morality, till the whole earth was filled with black crime, and venomous reptiles? Greek mythology, also, sings of the loves between the gods and the beautiful daughters of the earth; and the Hindoos mention marriages between nymphs and Divine heroes. But why has this heathen element been retained in the Mosaic narrative? We are accustomed, not to find a blind or heedless imitation, but a bold modification, not so much in the form as in the ideas with which the materials are ennobled. The wickedness which caused universal destruction was not commenced by man; the sons of God came down to the earth, and gave the pernicious example; man unfortunately imitated it; for, "every cogitation of the thoughts of his heart was evil continually" (ver. 5); he was powerless to resist the allurement of temptation. Noah was saved from the first generations of mankind; but his descendants are not endowed with a more perfect nature; their hearts, also, are filled with evil imaginations from their youth (viii. 21); the only difference is, that the extent of their lives is limited to a hundred and twenty years; they cannot sin as *long* as their ancestors, but they may sin as *much;* their crimes may be more frequent, and more atrocious; but the depraved "sons of God" are destroyed; their iniquitous progeny is removed; the earth is delivered from all impiety which is daringly ascribed to heaven; henceforth, man can no more plead the seduction of superior beings to palliate his own misdeeds; there is no other evil demon but man's own passion; his heart is weak, but the temptation proceeds entirely from himself; "wickedness doth not come from heaven"; for, the whole race of heavenly seducers is annihilated; those "sons of God," who were celebrated in ancient songs and traditions, are, if they ever existed, extirpated with all their infamous progeny; the messengers of God in heaven are incorruptible angels; they give to man the example of virtue, not of vice; from them no evil can proceed. Thus, the Hebrew historian admits, for one moment, the existence of a superstition, in order for ever to subvert and to eradicate it.

God had breathed His spirit into man

the wickedness of man *was* great on the earth, and *that* every cogitation of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually: 6. And the Lord repented that He had made the man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. 7. And the Lord said, I will blot out the man whom I

(ii. 7); it was, then, originally pure and undefiled; but it was gradually corrupted by the weak frame with which it was coupled; it was depraved by the allurements of the flesh; and, the longer the spirit was the tenant of the body, the more did it lose its pristine brightness, and the greater was the danger of its becoming entirely covered with the rust of passion. God determined, therefore, that His spirit should not animate the human frame for so extended a period; it should leave the flesh after a hundred and twenty years, to renew and to continue its existence in a purer world, free from the fetters of the dust, and no more a slave to the baneful propensities of the flesh.

It is true, that to Noah and most of his immediate descendants are attributed ages far exceeding the period of 120 years; Abraham is stated to have reached the age of 175, Isaac of 180, and Jacob of 147 years; whilst to Amram even a life of 137 years is assigned (Exod. vi. 20). But it seems, that, in the time of Moses, an age of 120 years was deemed the utmost extent of human life; that later this point was rarely surpassed, whilst it was, in most cases, not attained; and seventy to eighty years were the average duration of man's existence on earth (Ps. xc. 10). But, if the age of hundred and twenty years was to become customary in the time of Moses only, why was it announced so many centuries before in a manner which seems distinctly to imply, that it was to be the rule in the generations immediately following? We cannot suppose so obvious a contradiction. The decrease of human vitality was decreed in the time of Noah; it tended, indeed, to the restricted number of 120 years; but the change was permitted to be gradual; the lives of the individuals had been regulated after the measure of a much more extensive existence; all their plans and undertakings, their domestic and social arrangements, were based upon it; a sudden diminution from nine hundred to a hundred and twenty years would have disturbed all their relations; they would have been unable either to realize their hopes, or to limit them. Besides, as we have explained above (p. 108), the innate strength of man was but imperceptibly worn away; the following generation was but little inferior to the preceding one; they might arrive to a very limited amount of years, but only very gradually; and, in the first ages after the renewal of the world by the deluge, the depravation of the Divine spirit in the flesh was less to be apprehended.—This appears to have been the conception of the Hebrew historian. Other ancient writers also mention the age of 120 years as that ordinarily reached during a long period; we may add, that 120 was, indeed, an astrological number of great significance, expressing an important epoch; and, thus, the statement of our text will receive additional light, and will cause less surprise.—The fall of the human families in the time of Noah was, therefore, punished in an analogous manner to the fall of Adam. In both cases, the duration of life was shortened; and in both, the earth also suffered for the crime of man. But, whilst the descendants of Adam shared the curse of his transgression, in the time of Noah the sinners alone perished, and his descendants commenced a new era under the sunshine of Divine mercy, which graciously remembers the innate human weakness and frailty; the wicked race was destroyed, and the world was renewed from the seed of the pious.

The renowned children of the sons of God mixed with the violent tribes then peopling the earth (ver. 4); universal corruption was the consequence of this

have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and reptile, and the fowls of the air; for I repent that I have made them. 8. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.

9. These *are* the generations of Noah: Noah was a righteous man, *and* perfect in his generations; with God

baneful intercourse; the heart of man, which—this is the doctrine of the Bible—by nature inclines to evil (viii. 21), was, by the power of the pernicious example, fearfully depraved in all its propensities (ver. 5); God was grieved to see the pride and crown of His creation fallen so deeply; He foresaw, that man would ever sin on earth; He regretted, therefore, that He had called him into existence (ver. 6); and His justice compelled Him to destroy the the race of the sinners. This awful necessity filled God with pain; and the text expresses well this feeling by repeating His determination with a certain melancholy earnestness (vers. 6, 7). But, lest the pious perish with the wicked, Noah was saved in the universal ruin; his piety secured him the Divine grace (ver. 8). The deliverance of Noah implies the grand and fruitful truth, that, though the generations of man may seem to decline and to become worse, a better race invariably rises on the ruins of the past; the old follies and vices are the groundwork, on which wisdom and virtue erect their magnificent structure. Most appropriately, therefore, did some of the Fathers of the Church compare the effects of the deluge with those of regenerative baptism.

Here concludes the introduction to the grand tragedy, which the Hebrew writer, conscious of its thrilling interest, unfolds with a warmth and pathos, not unfrequently rising to the sublime.

9—13. We have just been informed of the cause of the universal degeneracy on earth; the "sons of God" spread immorality among the children of Adam; their pernicious example seduced the impressionable heart of man. This account is followed by another shorter record, which repeats some features, and omits others (see note on vii. 1—10). The latter states simply, that the earth became depraved, and was replete with deeds of violence (ver. 11); that God saw the iniquity of all flesh (ver. 12), and that He determined, therefore, the destruction of man with the earth (ver. 13). The author begins, therefore, this important section with a new heading: "These are the generations of Noah", and connects with it at once the praise of the only man who remained "righteous and perfect" in his own and the preceding criminal generations; who reached even the exalted degree of Enoch's piety, for he also "walked with God"; and was, therefore, like him, worthy of being exempted from the general fate of his contemporaries.

But although God repented that He had made man, and resolved the destruction of all flesh with the earth, He did not execute His design; He annihilated the sinners, but left on earth the germ of future generations; He seemed anxious that no species of the former creatures should perish in the impending visitation; He was evidently averse, both to rejecting His old creation, and to producing a new one; the propensity of man was bad all his days, yet God did not create a rational being more worthy to bear His image. The animals, also, had depraved their way; yet he refrained from their entire destruction. And here we have an apt illustration of the Biblical words: "God is not a son of man, that He should repent." He had endowed man with a nature capable both of high internal purity, of which Enoch and Noah were examples, and of fearful depravity, which lowered him to the level of the animal creation (ver. 7). Ten generations had passed, and wickedness preponderated fearfully over virtue. His justice demanded an example of the most ignominious punishment; for man is not

walked Noah. 10. And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. 11. And the earth was corrupted before God, and the earth was filled with violence. 12. And God looked upon the earth, and behold, it was corrupted; for all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth. 13. And God said to Noah, The end of all flesh is come

necessarily bad; his nature does not *compel* him to wickedness; that piety which was attainable by two men within three generations, is not beyond the possibility of mankind in general: the evil had been done; and the infliction of punishment was inevitable. But should similar universal chastisements be periodically repeated? The example of that visitation alone would not be sufficient to counteract the evil propensities of man. Under these circumstances, a double course was possible. Either God might create a new and more perfect human race, which was, from its nature, not so liable to sin and impiety; or He might henceforth apply a more lenient test for the transgressions of man. God chose the latter alternative. *The God of Justice became a God of Mercy;* the severity of the Judge was changed to the love of the Father. Thus piety is still a glorious victory, and sin, though an ignominy, is regarded with compassion; the reward of the former is infinite, and the punishment of the latter less overwhelming. A new covenant was concluded between God and man (ix. 9—17). The descendants of Noah are regarded by God in another light, as the immediate progeny of Adam. The ultimate consequences of the first fall are widely different from those of the second fall. The former ends in the expulsion from the primitive happy abode, in an alienation from God, and in a sad and severe curse; the latter results in assurances of happiness and blessing, in prospects of the undisturbed sovereignty of man upon earth, and in a return to a more intimate relation between God and man. But let it be clearly remembered, that the latter blessings were not due to the greater piety of man, but to the unbounded mercy of God alone. Man does not prevail by his own righteousness, but owes peace and pardon to Divine mercy. —These are some of the principal ideas embodied in the history of the Flood. We were compelled to anticipate them here, in order to render the text more accurately intelligible.

The *earth* was corrupted, and full of violence, and all *flesh* had depraved its way upon the earth; therefore the end of all flesh was resolved, *together with the earth.* The earth is, in the Bible, not considered as a mere passive object; it is the habitation of man; it beholds his deeds of virtue and of baseness; it is, therefore, like the eternal heavens, invoked as a witness in solemn exhortations; it cries up to heaven if it is soiled with blood; it "vomits out" the wicked inhabitants. But the earth has also furnished the matter from which man was framed; there is, therefore, a certain mutual relation between both; if man is corrupted, the earth shares his degradation; if the one is exterminated, the other participates in the ruin; Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed together with their impious inhabitants; the Israelites were threatened, that when they should be led away as captives for their iniquity, their once blooming land would be converted into a dreary desert of thorns and thistles; whilst, at the return of the pious and penitent into their land, even the inhospitable wilderness would be changed into beautiful gardens and proud cedar-forests; and just as the first parents were, after their fall, doomed to exhaust their strength on a curse-laden soil; thus the generation of Noah was annihilated, together with the earth which had seen and suffered their iniquity. The Persian faith teaches, that in whatever country the sacredness of

before Me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.— 14. Make for thyself an ark of gopher wood; *in* cells shalt thou make the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. 15. And this *is the mode in* which thou shalt make it: The length of the ark *shall be* three hundred cubits, its breadth fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits. 16. Light shalt thou provide for the ark, and by the cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou make at its side; *with* lower, second, and third *stories* shalt thou make it. 17. For behold, I will bring a flood of water upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein *is* the breath of life, from under the heaven;

matrimony is violated, that country perishes, together with its inhabitants. The nearer man is to the state of nature, the more mysterious and inseparable appears to him his connection with the earth and its silently-working powers; the earth is the "great mother" of all men, who produces, nourishes, and may destroy them; and the heathen nations have based upon these conceptions many of their most beautiful myths, too universally known to require a detailed allusion. — But the *animals* must perish, because they had also beheld the iniquity of man; every witness of the degradation was to be removed; the history of man should commence a new epoch. If crimes were committed through the instrumentality of animals, the latter were also killed; an ox which had caused the death of a man, was destroyed; if a Hebrew town adopted idolatrous worship, its inhabitants were destroyed with their cattle; whilst piety and faith were attended by prosperity among the beasts; the avarice of Achan was punished by death, and the destruction of his family and his property; when the Amalekites were to be extirpated, the animals were included in the fatal decree; and when the Ninevites did penance by fasting and humiliation, the beasts shared the same acts of external grief. The horror against bloodshed was so intense, that every reminiscence of it was to be eradicated; some Indian tribes pursue with their united force the wild beast which has killed a man, and the family of the murdered is an abomination and a disgrace till they have killed that or another beast of the same species; and other ancient nations went a step still farther, and doomed even inanimate objects (as an axe) with which a crime had been perpetrated to ignominous treatment, if the author of the misdeed could not be discovered (see notes on Exod. xxi. 28—32); and if, among the Hindoos, a man is killed by an accidental fall from a tree, all his relations assemble, cut it down, and reduce it to chips which they scatter to the winds.

14—22. God had hitherto pronounced, in general terms only, His determination to annihilate the earth and its inhabitants. He now reveals to Noah the nature of the punishment; He states, that a universal flood shall destroy "all flesh which possesses the breath of life," so that "all that is on earth shall die." But Noah, his three sons, and their wives, should escape the general destruction; and, lest the living creation perish, which the love of God had but lately produced, Noah was ordered to gather a pair, male and female, of each species of the birds, the beasts, and reptiles, and to provide food sufficient for the time of the deluge. Now, for his own reception, and that of the animals, he was

every thing that *is* on the earth shall die. 18. But I establish My covenant with thee; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee: 19. And of every living being, of all flesh, two of every *sort* shalt thou bring into the ark, to preserve *them* alive with thee; they shall be male and female. 20. Of the fowls after their kind, and of the cattle after their kind, of every reptile of the earth after its kind, two of every *sort* shall come to thee, to preserve *them* alive. 21. And take thou to thyself of all food that is eaten, and thou shalt gather *it* to thee; and it shall be for food for thyself and for them. 22. And Noah did according to all that God commanded him; so he did.

commanded to make an ark of cypress wood, three stories high, and to divide its interior into cells. To protect it against the influx of water, it was to be daubed with pitch from within and from without. It was to be provided with a door at the side, and with windows in the upper part, or the roof. So far, the construction of the ark offers no difficulties. But its size is of such enormous dimensions, that the technical obstructions seem insuperable. It was to be three hundred cubits long, fifty cubits broad, and thirty cubits high—or 450,000 cubits in contents. Now, the cubit is the length of the fore-arm, or from the elbow to the extremity of the longest finger; it is nowhere used of a shorter measure, as has been arbitrarily maintained; and it has been proved, that, in an architectural point of view, such a vessel, which would be equivalent, "in capacity or stowage, to eighteen of the largest ships in present use," is impossible; as, indeed, an ark constructed, in the beginning of the seventeenth century, by the Dutch Mennonite, Janson, after the stated dimensions, broke into pieces before it was completed; though a ship built in the same proportions, but much smaller dimensions (120 feet long, 20 feet wide, and 12 feet high), proved successful. We must confess, that the size of the ark forms one of those difficulties in the history of the deluge which assist us in arriving at a clear historical view concerning its character, and which we shall soon consider in their systematic connection (see the treatise after the eighth chapter).

CHAPTER VII.

1. And the Lord said to Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before

1—10. The commands of God concerning the approaching deluge seem complete; its cause, the corruption of the human race, has been clearly stated (vi. 9—13); Noah was ordered to build an ark after prescribed proportions (vi. 14—16); to take into it specimens of all animals, and every necessary provision (vi. 19—21); and to enter it with his family (vi. 18). But after it had even been mentioned, that Noah had executed all that God had commanded him (vi. 22), the text not only repeats, in the first ten verses of the seventh chapter, several of the statements already distinctly made (vii. 1, 5, 9), but, what is more important,

Me in this generation. 2. Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thyself by sevens, the male and its female: and of the beasts which *are* not clean, by two, the male and its female. 3. Also of fowls of the air by sevens, the male and the female; to preserve the seed alive upon the face of all the earth. 4. For in yet seven days I shall cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and I shall destroy every living being which I have made from the face of the earth. 5. And Noah did according to all

it is in one point *irreconcilable with the preceding narrative.* Noah was commanded to take into the ark *seven* pair of all clean, and one pair of all unclean animals (vii. 2, 3); whereas he had before been ordered to take *one* pair of *every* species (vi. 19, 20), no distinction whatever between clean and unclean animals having there been made. All the attempts at arguing away this discrepancy have been utterly unsuccessful. The difficulty is so obvious, that the most desperate efforts have been made. Some regard the second and third verses as the later addition of a pious Israelite; while Rabbinical writers maintain that six pairs were *taken* by Noah, but one pair *came to him spontaneously!* Is it necessary to refute such opinions? The explanation at present generally given is, that the beginning of the seventh chapter is merely a more definite or specified repetition of the preceding account. But let us see if this view is tenable. In the first command of God, we read: "And of every living being, of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to preserve them alive with thee; they shall be male and female: of the fowls after their kind, and of the cattle after their kind, of every reptile of the earth after its kind, two of every sort shall come to thee, to preserve them alive" (vi. 19, 20). Can there be any doubt regarding this statement? It says, as distinctly as language can express, that Noah was to bring into the ark two animals of every species, male and female. And which is the second command of God addressed to Noah? "Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thyself by sevens, the male and its female; and of the beasts that are not clean by two, the male and its female. Also of fowls of the air by sevens, the male and the female; to preserve the seed alive upon the face of all the earth" (vii. 2, 3). Is there any doubt or indistinctness about this injunction? Not two promiscuously of all beasts, but of the unclean species only were to be collected, whilst of every clean species seven pairs were to be taken. Who, then, can declare these two conflicting statements to be identical? or regard the one simply as a detailed explanation of the other? or consider a reconciliation possible? We appeal to every unbiassed understanding. The Bible cannot be abused to defy common sense, to foster sophistry and perverse reasoning, to cloud the intellect, or to poison the heart with the rank weeds of insincerity; nothing but the despair of perplexity could lead men to declare, with an affected humility, that the exposition of the books written for man is beyond the reach of the human intellect. We do not hesitate to acknowledge here the manifest contradiction, as we have avowed it in the history of the Creation. And we explain it here on the same unobjectionable principle which we have found efficient in the former instance. The author of the Pentateuch, or the Jehovist, used, among other materials, especially an old and venerable document, or that of the Elohist (see p. 61), and he based his immortal work upon it; but he enlarged it, wherever he believed that the

that the Lord commanded him. 6. And Noah *was* six hundred years old when the flood of water was upon the earth.—7. And Noah, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, went into the ark, on account of the water of the flood. 8. Of clean beasts, and of beasts which are *not* clean, and of fowls, and of every thing that creepeth upon the earth, 9. There went in two and two to Noah into the ark, the male and the female, as God had commanded Noah. 10. And it came to pass after seven

context required an amplification, and he inserted facts and reflections derived from his own experience and wisdom. Now, the beginning of the seventh chapter is such a supplementary addition of the Jehovist. In the time of the earlier Elohist the system of sacrifices was not yet developed, nor were the animals fit for an offering distinguished from those which were an abomination to the Lord; the difference between clean and unclean animals was not yet established. The Elohist was, therefore, satisfied with one pair of every species; his only end was the preservation of the animal kingdom; and a greater number of animals than that absolutely necessary for this purpose would have been a superfluous burthen to the ark. But the Jehovist deemed a thank-offering after the flood indispensable; the pious and God-beloved Noah could not be indifferent at the time of his miraculous and merciful deliverance; he built an altar, and brought to God an offering "of all the clean beasts and all the clean birds" (viii. 20); this offering was to be provided for; one pair of every clean species was now no more sufficient; and the Jehovist, therefore, prudently introduced the significant number of seven pairs. But he himself neither thought, nor did he in any way intend to be, in opposition to the statement of the Elohist; he understood the *two* animals which Noah was to bring, as merely signifying that always male and female were to be chosen, that they were to be *pairs*, without the *number* of these pairs being stated; for he writes: "Two and two went in to Noah into the ark, male and female, as Elohim had commanded Noah" (ver. 9). This is the only rational solution possible; but we add distinctly, that our narrative is in no other point contradictory; it contains repetitions, but no further discrepancy; the Jehovist designed full harmony with the Elohist, and he has preserved it in all other respects; he has so closely interwoven his additions with the former document, that it is now impossible and perfectly inadmissible to separate both, and to dismember the narrative. The portions of the Elohist seem, indeed, to form a complete whole in themselves. The earth is corrupted, its annihilation is resolved upon, the ark is constructed, and the animals are collected in it (vi. 9—22). The deluge begins, increases, diminishes, and ceases; all living things are destroyed; Noah, with his family and the animals in the ark, are alone saved; he leaves the ark, and the blessing of God is pronounced over the animals (vii. 11—viii. 19). But God concludes a new covenant with Noah, enforces certain primary laws, promises never to send another deluge, and appoints the rainbow as the sign of His pledge (ix. 1—17). The statement of Noah's age concludes and completes the narrative (ix. 28, 29). No link is wanting to form a well-connected chain of facts. We have a perfect *history* of the deluge. But the Scriptures do not intend to give mere history. They desire to make the facts subservient to ideas, to render the events practically profitable by reflections, to teach, in an individual occurrence, a general rule, and thus to

days, that the water of the flood was upon the earth.— 11. In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day, were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. 12. And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights. 13. On the selfsame day entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, into the ark; 14. They, and every beast after its kind, and the cattle after their kind, and every reptile that creepeth upon the earth after its kind, and every fowl after its kind, every bird, every winged *creature*. 15. And they went

spiritualise the facts. And this task is frequently performed by the Jehovist. He converts information into instruction, and instruction into education. He treats the events as a base for a spiritual edifice. He infuses into the mute materials the living breath of religion. And this is the advance which the Pentateuch shows within its own pages. Scripture is so far from excluding the idea of development, that it offers itself the most remarkable example of progress. It is no dead letter; it admits of a more and more spiritual acceptation. It is no stagnant river, but a well of refreshing floods. Let but narrow-mindedness shake off the chains of the letter, and let apathy but hasten to the reviving waves.

11—24. The description of the flood itself is now introduced in plain, but vigorous, and often poetical language. Repetitions and synonyms are skilfully employed; but, so far from weakening the force of the ideas, they add powerfully to their emphasis; they express the unspeakable misery that befell the earth; the compassion of the writer seems inexhaustible; he dwells again and again on the destruction of every living soul; he was compelled to unfold that awful picture of distress, because he intended to use it as a means of correction, as the text for eternal lessons, as the basis for a new and better creation.

We can here be brief in the exposition of the narrative; for we have more fully treated its internal difficulties in a supplementary treatise at the end of the eighth chapter; we have there examined the evidences of history, and the natural sciences, especially geology, concerning a universal deluge; and have unreservedly stated our opinion on this subject, which is, next to the Creation, perhaps the most important portion of Genesis for forming a true estimate of the nature and composition of the Pentateuch.—The flood began on the seventeenth day of the second month, which was later called *Jar;* it corresponds with April or May; it is not the Marheshvan, or October, which is never designated as the second, but the eighth month; for the year is, throughout the Bible, counted from Nisan, not from Tishri (see note on Exod. xii. 2). The numbers introduced in the history of the deluge, are, with the few exceptions already stated, not significant; they cannot be explained symbolically; they were evidently considered, by the author, as historical; and we must, therefore, abstain from forcing upon them, either individually, or in their aggregate amount, any mystic meaning, either religious or astronomical.

The waters of the oceans, and the torrents of rain combined to inundate the earth; the "fountains of the deep," and the "windows of the heaven," were opened to-

in to Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein *is* the breath of life. 16. And those that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him. And the Lord closed behind him.—17. And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bore up the ark, and it rose above the earth. 18. And the waters prevailed, and increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark floated along upon the face of the waters. 19. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high mountains which *are* under the whole heaven, were covered. 20. Fifteen cubits above *them* prevailed the water, and the mountains were covered. 21. And all flesh died

gether, and both poured forth their endless floods; for, when the chaos was, by the Divine will, brought into order and harmony, a part of the primitive water remained below, to form the seas, and the foundation of the earth; whilst the rest was gathered in heaven, above the firmament, to serve as the stores of the future rain, which is sent upon the earth through windows, or doors. It was, therefore, not rain alone that caused the deluge; God unfettered the watery element wherever it was kept by His omnipotence; it was not a deluge of rain, but simply a "deluge of water."

Eight human beings entered the ark, Noah with his wife, and his three sons with their three wives (ver. 13); in the pious family of Noah, monogamy was still strictly observed, as it was originally instituted; whilst the Cainite, Lamech, in the seventh generation from Adam, had two wives (iv. 23); the domestic virtues, the basis of which is the sacredness of matrimony, are the surest test of social and public excellence.—Together with Noah, all the animals were brought into the ark; they came in pairs, two of each species (ver. 15; for this portion belongs to the Elohist); they did not fly spontaneously into the vessel, "from the innate instinct which teaches them the approach of a danger," which curious opinion was advanced to evade the miracle, that Noah could know and seize all the animals; but it would require, indeed, a much greater miracle, to suppose, that all the animals, from every zone and clime, hastened just to the spot where the ark was standing.—The enumeration is not only complete, it is also rhetorical; the words, "every fowl, every bird, every winged creature" (ver. 14), are, however, no idle synonyms; they embrace the three chief classes of winged beings, the eatable species, the birds which people the air, and enliven it by the sounds of their melodies, and the endless swarms of insects, the greatest part of which possess neither the utility of the former, nor the beauty of the latter.

Noah, with his family, and all the animals, were in the ark; God Himself closed it, as a proof that He would protect it against all danger, and watch over it in the midst of the towering waves (ver. 16); and the deluge commenced. The floods rushed on for forty days; the waters increased and rose: but they did not sink the ponderous ark; on the contrary, they raised it above the earth, in opposition to the ordinary physical laws (ver. 17). And, although the waters grew higher and higher, the ark was safely borne along on the surface of the waves (ver. 18). But the floods continued to swell irresistibly; no obstacle of nature, no work of human hands could stay them; the highest moun-

that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every reptile that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: 22. All in whose nostrils *was* the breath of the spirit of life, of all that *was* on the dry *land*, died. 23. And He blotted out every living being that was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and reptiles, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained, and those that *were* with him in the ark. 24. And the waters prevailed upon the earth a hundred and fifty days.

tains of the earth were immersed (ver. 19), and the water exceeded by fifteen cubits their highest peaks (ver. 20; comp. viii. 5). All animals died, and every man (ver. 21). The unchecked power of the waves reigned for a hundred and fifty days (ver. 24). Every sound of life was silenced on the wide surface of the earth; the breath of joy was hushed in the air; the gloomy wings of death were spread over the globe; the abode of universal life was converted into a universal grave. The occupants of the ark alone were left as the witnesses of of an annihilated creation; and none but Noah and his family were spared to mourn over the misery and devastation that filled the world.

The Hebrew text breathes, in this description, a majestic power; it is pervaded by a tender sympathy, nor does it fail to arouse it in the reader's mind;—a master's hand has sketched a great theme; and a few strokes sufficed for him to exhaust it.

CHAPTER VIII.

1. And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that *was* with him in the ark: and God

1—4. The love of God watched even while His justice punished; nor did His anger last longer than His wisdom demanded. When the wicked had received the reward of their iniquity, it was time to remember the piety of Noah, and to rescue him among the ruins of a desolated earth. The animals which had witnessed the atrocious crimes of a depraved generation, had shared the destruction of those to whom dominion was given over them; but it was not in the plan of the Deity to produce a new creation; the world had been pronounced perfect; it might be regenerated, but its plan and design could not be modified; it was the emanation of the combined omnipotence, wisdom, and goodness of God; and it was, therefore, incapable of higher excellence; the Framer of the Universe does not superfluously lavish His creative power; therefore, He saved, in the general deluge, specimens of the animals which He had produced; and He applied, for the cessation of the flood, the natural agency of a dry wind; He had endowed the powers of nature from the beginning with extraordinary attributes; the Creation is the miracle of miracles; it involves all future wonders; and, whenever His wrath or His affection wished to produce marvellous effects, He merely sent the "winds as His messengers, and as His servants the flaming fire" (Ps. civ. 4); except in a few grand visitations, when His omnipotence deemed it necessary to suspend the ordinary laws, either creating a dry path in the turbulent sea, or arresting celestial orbs in their eternal course. This

caused a wind to pass over the earth; and the waters subsided. 2. And the fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were closed, and the rain from heaven was

is the Biblical doctrine. It is, therefore, scarcely a poetical metaphor if the text adds, that the fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were closed; the waters ceased to flow from the two sources which had contributed their stores for the catastrophe; and a hundred and fifty days after the commencement of the flood, the billows began to retire from the earth. Exactly after five months, the ark of Noah grounded "*on the mountains of Ararat.*"

If tradition is at all received as a historical witness, the situation of the country, and of the famous mountains of Ararat, is indisputably certain; they form a part of *Armenia*; for Ararat was used as synonymous with the whole of that country. It is situated between the Araxes and the lakes of Van and Ormiah. The vegetation of Armenia is beautiful and abundant: its pastures rival the renowned fields of Media, and render it one of the most fertile countries of the earth. But the whole land is intersected by extensive tracts of high and naked table-lands; the peaks are generally not of very great elevation, but they are, even in the warmest season, not freed from the snow which perpetually envelopes them. But, in the province of Erivan, which formerly belonged to Persia, but was, in 1828, ceded to Russia, is an extensive plateau which ascends 2,740 feet above the level of the sea; there, about seven geographical miles to the south of the town of Erivan, on the right side of the river Araxes, nearly equidistant from the Black and Caspian Seas, rises a gigantic peak, clad in eternal ice, overtopping the whole region in solitary and gloomy grandeur, and hitherto but rarely trod by human feet; "a giant who rises to spread terror." This is the mountain to which all but universal tradition has given the name of Mount Ararat. And here the second father of mankind is said to have landed when the waters of the flood began to subside.

The Ararat consists of two unequal peaks, both of which disappear in the clouds; the loftier summit is 16,254 Parisian feet high, whilst the other north-western pinnacle rises to the elevation of 12,284 Parisian feet above the level of the sea. Both are 12,000 yards distant from each other. According to the Treaty of Turkomanshee (concluded in 1828), the boundary limit between the empires of Russia, Turkey, and Persia passes over the summit of the Little Ararat. The north-eastern declivity of the whole mountain is about 20 versts in length, its north-western, 30. The region around the mountain makes the impression of a dreary, devastated wilderness; it is haunted by bears, small tigers, lynxes, and lions, and is infested by large and extremely venomous serpents, which frequently impede the progress of caravans; and great numbers of wild boars live in the swamps which abound on the banks of the Araxes, and the foot of the Ararat. At a little distance, the summit does not appear particularly imposing; for numerous lower mountains obstruct the view; and the plateau itself on which it rises, is of considerable height. But, viewed from the vast plain which skirts its base, it appears "as if the hugest mountains of the world had been piled upon each other to form this one sublime immensity of earth, and rock, and snow." Here the aspect is overpowering; it awes the mind with the stupendous power of the Creator; the peaks seem to reach into the very heart of heaven; and the sides disappear dimly in the endless horizon. All the surrounding mountains sink into insignificance. Its shape is almost regular; it is not deformed by any unusual prominence; the slope towards the summit is at first gradual; but becomes abrupt when it reaches the region of snow. If the rays of the sun fall upon it, it shines in indescribable splendour. The shape of the Little Ararat is almost

stopped; 3. And the waters retired from the earth more and more: and at the end of a hundred and fifty

a perfect cone, only marked by numerous small furrows radiating from the summit; but seen from the top of the Great Ararat, its head appears like the section of a square truncated pyramid, with rocky elevations on the edges and in the middle. Around are situated the monuments of fearful volcanic eruptions; calcined stones, and masses of cinders give witness of the destructive powers which mysteriously work in the interior of the mountain; in 1783, a devastating eruption is recorded to have taken place; so late as in the year 1840, huge rocks were hurled down by a volcanic earthquake, destroyed many lives, and buried whole villages, and their inhabitants; 3,000 houses were thrown down in the district of Sharur alone; and the havoc was greater still in other parts; the banks of the Araxes gaped in cracks 10 to 12 feet wide, and threw out water and great quantities of sand; while the river itself was in many parts quite dry, and in others was in a boiling agitation; the monastery of St. James, and the village Arghuri were among the first places destroyed by the earthquake; they were overwhelmed by the ruins from the mountain; streams of melted snow, ejected from the raging chasm, covered the fields and gardens around; the wide plains of the Araxes bear still witness of the calamity; deep fissures have been left in the surface of the earth; and these awful convulsions lasted more than two months. The volcanic productions which are found at the southern side of the Caucasus, a distance of 220 versts, are probably violent ejections once borne thither from the Ararat in a formidable explosion. The mound, which evidently once was a volcano, and which is obviously different in its nature from the main body, rises to the height of an imposing mountain. The two peaks of the Ararat are separated by a wild and dark chasm, cutting deeply into the interior of the mountain, filling the spectator with horror and shuddering, containing in its innermost recesses immense masses of never melting ice of the dimensions of enormous towers. And this stupendous and fearful abyss is probably the exhausted crater of the Ararat, become wider than ever since the eruption of 1840, and, since that catastrophe, exposing on its upper sides the white, yellow, and vitreous feldspars of which the mountain consists. Pious hermits seem, in that fearful precipice, to have sought refuge from the cares and vanities of the world; but robbers and outlaws also have here found almost impregnable strongholds, powerful enough to defy the arm of justice. The vegetation on the sides of the mountain is extremely scanty; stones, sand, and lava form their mass. Eagles and hawks soar round its majestic summits. In the hottest season only, the snow melts on the peak of the Little Ararat; and this event is used as a kind of calendar by the agriculturists in the surrounding villages. In September and October it is generally free of its hoary crust. But the Great Ararat is, for about three miles from the summit, in an oblique direction, covered with eternal snow and ice, and, for the greater part of the year, gloomily shrouded in dense and heavy clouds. The summit of this noble mountain forms a slightly convex, almost circular platform, about two hundred paces in circuit. The perpetual ice is unbroken by rock or stone. The prospect from this awful spot is boundless, but desolate; the whole valley of the Araxes seems covered with a grey mist; the town of Erivan is scarcely discernible by the black kernel which it forms; the view to the south is somewhat more distinct; on the western and south-eastern sides appear a great number of mountains with conical summits, and with hollows which indicate their volcanic nature; but it is remarkable, that the Lake Goktschai is visible behind the lofty chain of mountains which enclose it on the south; and lie before the eye like a beautiful dark-blue plain. At the margin, the summit slopes off precipitously, especially on the

days the waters decreased. 4. And the ark rested, in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, over

north-eastern and south-eastern sides. A gentle depression connects this pinnacle with a somewhat lower eminence at a distance of 397 yards. Here it is believed that the ark of Noah rested.

The perils and fatigues of the ascent of this mountain are so considerable, that it was several times unsuccessfully attempted. The rarefaction of the air in the upper part causes violent oppressions of the chest; detached masses of ice and snow frequently roll down, to the greatest danger of the travellers; and huge stones threaten at every moment to crush them; steps must be cut in the ice, and hewn in the rocks of the precipices; and the chasms and abysses, the steepness of some of the rocky tracts, the deep cracks occasionally dividing the ice, and the smoothness of the glaciers, make the experiment one of the utmost risk. The French traveller, Tournefort, undertook the ascent with the same inauspicious result in 1700, as the bashaw of Bayazeed in the beginning of the present century. These disappointments rejoiced the hearts of the Armenians. For, they considered, that the sanctity of the mountain would lose, if its heights were searched by the curiosity of man. It is almost an article of faith with them, that the summit of the Mount Ararat is inaccessible; and they firmly believe, that the ark of Noah still exists on that solemn peak. These convictions have been strengthened by ancient legends, busily spread and confirmed by the Church. It is reported, that the monk James, who was later patriarch of Nisibis, a contemporary of St. Gregory, wished to see, with his own eyes, the sacred ark; he tried an ascent; from exhaustion he frequently fell asleep; and when he awoke, he invariably found, that he had slipped back to the point from whence he had started. A vision in a dream at last informed him of the impossibility of his purpose; but, as a reward for his zeal, God sent him down a piece of the ark, which is preserved, by the Armenians, as their most precious relic, in the cathedral of Etchmiadzen. — However, in spite of this venerable tradition, the German traveller, Dr. Parrot, after two fruitless attempts, effected an indisputable ascent of the summit of the Greater Ararat, on the 9th of October, 1829; and, five years later, in August, 1834, the traces of Dr. Parrot were followed, and his accounts verified, by the Russian traveller Antornomoff. It is, indeed, not the fault of these two intrepid men, if their reports are disdainfully rejected by the pious Armenians as barefaced impositions. The latest successful ascent was made in the course of 1856, by five English travellers (Maj. Rob. Stuart, Maj. Fraser, Rev. Walter Thursby, Mr. Theobald, and Mr. Evans), who have considerably enriched our knowledge of these interesting regions. They saw uninjured the oak cross which Professor Abich had, in 1845, fixed about 1,200 feet below the peak of the cone, and the Russian inscription on it was still perfectly legible. But the fact, that the ark was not found on the summit, caused serious uneasiness, even to European scholars; they thought this a very untoward circumstance; and at last entirely renounced the idea, that the ark landed on Mount Ararat; they now firmly assert, that it happened to float merely in its neighbourhood at the end of the 150 days, but that it was then slowly carried along in an eastward direction (comp. xi. 2); and that the real place of its concealment is entirely withdrawn from human knowledge. — But the words, "the ark rested over the mountains of Ararat," exclude this conception; and admit of no other interpretation but that of actual cessation of floating. Nor need we despondingly ask, how Noah, his family, and the numberless animals preserved in the ark, were able to effect the dangerous descent, utterly difficult as it proved for many centuries later to persons furnished with all serviceable auxiliaries and implements; the supposition of a miracle is not even necessary; for, according to the text, they

the mountains of Ararat. 5. And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month: in the tenth *month*, on the first *day* of the month, appeared the tops of the mountains.—6. And it came to pass, at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made: 7. And he sent out the raven; and it went to and fro, until the waters were dried up from the earth. 8. And he sent out the dove from him, to see if the waters had abated from the face of the ground; 9. But the dove

left the ark only after it had reached the ground *with the gradually subsiding waters.*

5. The ark had been raised and borne up above the level of the earth as the waters increased (vii.17); it had been carried along the surface of the waves as long as they were augmenting in quantity (vii. 18); but it ceased to float as soon as the infusion of new waters ceased to agitate the current of the floods; it rested, in the seventh month, over the mountains of Ararat (viii. 4); it gradually descended as the waters subsided; and, on the first day of the tenth month, it grounded on the peaks of Ararat (viii. 5). The highest points of the mountains, which the waves had overtopped by fifteen cubits (vii. 20), now became visible amidst the dreariness of the universal sea (viii. 5), and afforded a resting-place to the only structure then enclosing living creatures.

6—14. From this lofty elevation, Noah enjoyed a distant prospect over the adjacent countries; for forty days more he saw nothing but endless waves around, and a misty sky, enveloped in grey vapours, above; then, at last, he thought it time to test the condition of the earth; he sent out a raven, which, though delighting in the humid atmosphere, returned periodically to the ark to take its food; but this confirmed to him only that the higher regions were free from the immersing floods; he desired to learn *how far* the water had subsided, and whether it was already *lower* over the earth (ver. 8); he therefore sent out the dove, probably seven days after the raven; but that more delicate bird found nowhere a resting-place; the whole surface of the earth was still covered with water; no trace of vegetation or animal life was visible; and the faithfully-guiding instinct led the dove soon back to Noah, who received it again in the ark. The waters were, however, manifestly decreasing; after other seven days the dove was again despatched; it could now stay out nearly a whole day; but towards the evening it returned with a fresh olive-leaf in its mouth, as a cheering proof that the tops, at least, of the trees had emerged from the floods, although the return itself of the freedom-loving bird satisfied him that the earth was not sufficiently restored to its normal condition to yield the necessary food. Another week was enough to work this long-desired effect. The dove was sent out a third time, and returned no more. Not many days later, in the beginning of the first month, the *surface* of the earth was free from the waters (ver. 13), and on the twenty-seventh day of the second month, the ground itself was perfectly dry (ver. 14), so that God could now command Noah to leave the ark with all those who had been saved in it.—This is the connection of the narrative; thus understood it is not only clear, but logical and forcible in the highest degree.—It is usual to conceive the raven here as the bird which easily discovers, and greedily feeds on carrion; and to understand the dove and the olive-leaf, as harbingers of restored peace. But this is to be taken with a certain necessary limitation. The raven, the name of which signifies the black

found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned to him into the ark, for the waters *were still* on the face of the whole earth: and he stretched out his hand, and took her, and brought her back to himself into the ark. 10. And he waited yet other seven days; and again he sent out the dove from the ark; 11. And the dove came *back* to him in the evening; and, behold, in her mouth *was* a fresh olive-leaf: and Noah knew that the waters had abated from the earth. 12. And he waited yet other seven

bird, or the bird of night, is generally used as a creature of mysterious, if not awful qualities; it belongs, with its whole species, to the unclean and forbidden birds; it fills the air with wild shrieks when it despairingly searches for its scanty food; but was just for this reason employed to convey miraculous and plentiful food to the prophet; it is cold and loveless to its young; and though it may not, as the ancients believed, forsake its white offspring immediately after their birth, it certainly expels them from the nest, and even from the surrounding places, as soon as they are able to fly, though they may still be too helpless to find their own food; it inhabits the places of the most dreary devastation; it is essential to complete the picture of awful desolation, and it is, in this sense, mentioned together with the pelican, the urchin, and the heron, the jackal and the ostrich, the dragon and the vulture. It indeed preys upon putrifying corpses; and is especially eager to pick out the eyes of the dead; it attacks sometimes even the eyes of the living; but our context seems to imply, that the raven sent out by Noah regularly returned for its food to the ark, till the waters had entirely abated.—The dove is, in almost all respects, regarded in a perfectly opposite light. It is lovely to the eye by the silvery brightness of its wings; it is a clean bird, and the only one which was fit for sacrifices, especially for burnt and expiatory offerings. This was, perhaps, intended to counteract the general superstition of the Syrians, Phoenicians, and others, who considered the dove as a holy bird, which it was criminal to kill, or to eat. Its plaintive notes move the softest chords of the heart; and the very grief which they express is soothing to the afflicted soul; it is far from aggressive; it is the type of suffering innocence, and of that Divine wisdom which enlightens while it purifies; it is frightened from its resting place and pursued; its wings are its only protection; and it seeks refuge from the virulence of the persecutor in the rocks of the mountains, and the clefts of the desert; it is faithful and affectionate, and serves, therefore, to express the fondest love; it is the most endearing, most caressing term for tender and fervent attachment; the most beautiful part of the human face, and that most betraying the passion which burns in the soul, the eye, is compared to doves hovering over water-brooks and bathed in milk; "my sister, my friend, my dove, my virtuous bride," is the effusion of a devoted lover's heart; and the people of Israel itself has no more beautiful name, than "the turtle-dove of God."—Hence, it is manifest how appropriately the raven, on the one hand, remained without as the inauspicious witness of solitude and death; while the dove, on the other hand, announced the regeneration of nature, and the animating spirit of life which began again to pervade the general silence. But we have no scriptural evidence for the opinion that the ancient Hebrews regarded olive branches as a symbol of peace and joy; though it is generally known that the classical nations con-

days; and sent out the dove; and she returned not again to him any more.—13. And it came to pass in the six hundredth and first year, in the first *month*, on the first *day* of the month, that the waters were dried up from the earth: and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dry. 14. And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth perfectly dry.—15. And God

nected with them those ideas; and though it appears that the later Jews adopted from the Greeks these notions, among many others. And yet we cannot deny that the olive-tree bore a sacred character in the eyes of the early Israelites; the holy oil used in the Tabernacle and the Temple, was carefully prepared of the fruit of the olive, and every other fuel for the sacred lamps was rigorously interdicted. It is, besides, a familiar fact, that the olive-tree grows even under the water; the greater was, therefore, the propriety of introducing a branch of that tree as the first indication of the abating floods; and it may be finally remarked, that according to a very ancient notion, the olive-tree was regarded as a type of *fertility*; for Herodotus relates, that the Epidaurians, at a time of barrenness of their soil, were commanded by Apollo to erect statues to Damia and Auxesia (that is, Demeter and Persephone), not of brass or stone, but "of the wood of cultivated olive." The great amount of time and care which the restoration of olive plantations requires after a hostile invasion, or agricultural neglect, is stated among the causes of its selection as an emblem of peace. The earth had been destroyed; desolation prevailed throughout the globe as a consequence of the iniquity of man; what messenger of returning happiness could be more appropriate than a dove, the lovely type of purity and atonement through the spirit of God, offering an olive-leaf, the symbol of the renewed fruitfulness of the earth? In this one feature alone we see the whole end of the fearful visitation of the deluge, the relief of man from his internal and external misery; he feels his connection with God as a forgiving father strengthened, and receives the promise of an easier existence; both the sin of Adam, and the awful curse which it had called forth, are to a certain degree removed, or, at least, mitigated. We have given a description of the olive-tree in the commentary on Exodus, p. 370, to which we refer. That the olive-tree grows in Armenia is proved by unquestionable testimony.

15—22. The waters had been withdrawn within their banks and shores; the earth had resumed, in many respects, its former appearance; its surface was no more entirely destitute of vegetable life; the trees put forth their foliage, and the valleys their verdure; the earth was no longer to bear the aspect of desolation and confusion; nowhere was the eye struck by awful indications of a sudden convulsive destruction; the punishment had been suffered, and mercy obliterated the traces of the crime. The globe was ready to receive again its master, and to nourish him, and the numberless tribes of the animal creation. On the command of God, Noah and his family left the ark, together with all the living beings which had been preserved by him to secure new tribes of occupants of the air, the fields, and the forests. All the species of animals were restored to the earth; "every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl" left the ark, that none of the creatures which were once formed by the Divine will, might be wanting; the deluge was not to interrupt the main course of universal history; all the generations, from the beginning to the latest ages, were to be connected by one

spoke to Noah, saying, 16. Go out of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee. 17. Bring out with thee every living creature that *is* with thee, of all flesh, *both* of fowl, and of cattle, and of every reptile that creepeth upon the earth; that they may increase abundantly on the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth. 18. And Noah went out, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him:

unbroken chain: the tree of time was temporarily stripped of its branches and leaves; but its stem was neither felled nor injured; it was full of its native strength, and destined soon to bloom again in all its former richness and beauty. But yet, a new order of things was to begin; therefore, God again blessed the animals with the promise of fruitfulness, desiring them to spread on the earth, which He delights to see replete with life, and to echo with the sound of joy. The renewal of the dominion of man over nature was reserved to a still more solemn moment. For, the pious Noah, who was deeply impressed with the miracle of his deliverance in the midst of the ruin of the globe, felt the irresistible desire of manifesting his gratitude to the Lord of life and death. He built, and consecrated to His name, an altar, and sacrificed upon it burnt-offerings "of every clean beast, and every clean fowl." A more magnificent animal offering was never before nor after brought to God. The whole creation contributed to it whatever species was acceptable to Him.—When Noah left the ark, he found that the variety of the animal creatures was in no way smaller than when he had entered it; they were preserved by the love and wisdom of God; and they had even been blessed anew to spread and to multiply; he felt, with all the intensity of a susceptible mind, the overwhelming debt which he owed to God. His sacrifices were, therefore, essentially *thank-offerings*. But he was too clearly aware of his own unworthiness of those infinite benefits; he knew, that the hand of destruction had smitten his fellow-men on account of their iniquity; and he was conscious that the evil propensities of the human heart are too strong to withstand the temptation (ver. 21): therefore, these sacrifices partook, likewise, of the character of *sin-offerings*. They were, then, offered in that most sacred condition of mind, inexplicably uniting joy and fear, elevation of the soul and contrition of the heart, noble self-consciousness and trembling humility. The strength and the weakness of the human heart are never so wonderfully blended; man sees the light and the shadow of his nature; he attempts the upward flight, but is reminded of his limits. And God accepted the offering of Noah; "He smelled the sweet odour"; and was gratified. Will any one repeat the old objection, that such expressions of external gratification are unworthy of the Deity? If they were of a material or sensuous character, then they would, indeed, be used nowhere with greater impropriety than in this most solemn passage, which forms the connecting link between the world of Adam and that of Noah. But they are far from implying such perverse notions. Their primary meaning might, indeed, have been tinctured by the superstition of the time to which their origin belongs. But, at the period of the Pentateuch, they had lost every idolatrous element which might formerly have attached to them. The refinement of the language had kept, in general, pace with the intellectual and moral progress of the nation; but not always were the words altered when the ideas which they express had undergone a change; they assumed gradually, and almost imperceptibly, a nobler and more spiritual meaning; they were not brought into disuse, but accommodated to the new notions; they were

19. Every beast, every reptile, and every fowl, *and* whatsoever creepeth upon the earth, after their families, went out of the ark.—20. And Noah built an altar to the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. 21. And the Lord smelled the sweet odour; and the Lord said in His

not replaced by other words, but filled with another meaning. A misunderstanding was the less possible, the deeper the purer ideas had penetrated into the heart of the people. Among the many phrases which have thus been internally metamorphosed, that which occurs in our text is one of the most striking instances. The Hebrews might certainly, in the time of their physical and mental degradation, have shared the universal superstition of the heathen world, that the deities "smell the sweet odour" of the sacrifices, and find their delight in it. But when the multitude of gods gave way, in their convictions, to the One invisible and incorporeal God, who includes them all, the "sweet odour" received a different meaning; it was used as perfectly identical in meaning with *delight* or *pleasure;* this is plain beyond controversy from several later passages. The natural vigour of the language applied easily external functions of the senses to abstract notions and to operations of the mind. It would be bold, indeed, to assert. that the Pentateuch which enforces, with all the energy of which language is capable, the incorporeality and spirituality of God, should attribute to Him qualities of the grossest and most sensuous nature; the theology of the Pentateuch forms a consistent system in which one part cannot be in direct opposition with another; but the nature of God is the foundation of the whole system; we cannot doubt the one without destroying the other. The "sweet odour" of the incense or the burnt sacrifices was the *spirit of God* which hovered round the offerings, as a messenger of rest and peace, and which was hoped to be won or conciliated by the humble piety which had prompted the gift. It is the spirit of God which brought the chaos of matter into order and harmony; which fills and animates His prophets, and which revives the despondency of an erring heart, or the dry bones of a sunken nation. Nor did the New Testament reject that phrase, even in reference to its most sacred idea; for, it says: "Christ has given himself for us as an offering and a sacrifice to God *for a sweet-smelling savour*" (Ephes. v. 2). Thus, the Divine presence graciously accepted the grand sacrifice of Noah; He saw with delight the piety of the only family which had escaped the universal calamity; and He determined never again to expose the earth to so fearful a destruction, but to be mindful of the weakness of the human heart, which, though capable of godlike purity, falls an easy prey to the numberless allurements that surround it. He received the sin-offering of Noah as an atonement for the wickedness of the former generations; the sin of man was no more to be measured after the test of justice, but after that of mercy. God had, during several centuries, judged him after his innate *Divine* attributes; He now intended to view him with due regard to his *human* imperfections; He was aware, that though the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak. God proclaimed, that man cannot gain salvation by his own righteousness, but by Divine mercy. By this new and all-important doctrine, the love of God shines in higher splendour; but man sinks into deeper dependence; he lives henceforth not in virtue of his own moral excellence, but in consequence of Divine favour. The intellectual eminence which man had attained by partaking of the fruit of knowledge, was far from securing to him "to be like God"; he might, with his reason, penetrate into the mysteries of creation, but his heart is

heart: I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the cogitation of man's heart *is* evil from his youth; nor will I again smite any more every living being, as I have done. 22. While the earth remaineth, seed*time* and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.

feeble and insufficient, and requires the merciful assistance of God. However, this very weakness was destined in future to form man's most powerful protection. For God proclaimed, that although He does not eradicate sin from the heart of man, He regards it not with the severity of a judge, who demands perfect rectitude, but with the love of a father, who indulgently overlooks many offences springing from innate weakness. The deluge had, thus, been necessary, it was indispensable to serve an important end in the government of the moral world; and, though God regretted that it was necessary, He did not "repent" having inflicted it. The fall ended with a curse on the earth, the deluge with the cheering prospect, that it should no more suffer for the sin of man (ver. 21); and if, later, Sodom and Gomorrah were converted into dreary deserts, and Palestine was menaced with fearful desolation for the iniquity of its inhabitants, these visitations did not befall the whole globe, but only certain limited parts or districts.

As long as the earth stands, that is, in eternity, the regular change of the seasons shall not again be suspended, as had been the case in the year of the deluge; seedtime shall duly alternate with harvest, cold with heat, summer with winter, and day with night. It is evident, that these words express merely the general idea of the future preservation of a regular order in nature; they do not exactly enumerate all the usual changes which the inhabitants of our planet experience; they do not even distinctly specify the four seasons of the year; and still less *six* parts, as the Persian and Hindoo legends count; for, summer and winter only are clearly mentioned, and although the "seedtime" might correspond with autumn, the "harvest" is certainly not the spring, but the summer. Hereto are joined the general terms of "cold and heat," and, in order to complete the picture of regular succession, "day and night" are added, from which words we are, therefore, not justified in inferring, that, in the author's opinion, during the year of the flood, the light of the sun was either entirely or generally invisible. The year is, in western Asia, indeed, composed only of two markedly different seasons; the autumn, or rainy season, belongs to the winter; and the spring, or the months of the ripening corn, is reckoned with the summer (see notes on xxvii. 27—29).

SCIENCE AND THE NOACHIAN DELUGE.

Supplementary Note on Chapters VI. to VIII.

We have completed the verbal explanation of the deluge, and endeavoured to elucidate the single facts and ideas which it contains; but this subject is too important not to claim a general consideration as a whole, and too complicated not to require it. Religion, history, and natural philosophy, are equally interested in it; but they are here not allies, but apparently rivals; they seem not to support, but to contradict each other; they attempt individually to usurp the victory over the rest; and there is scarcely a

reflecting mind that has not taken part in favour of the one or the other of the claimants. It is our anxious desire to enable our readers to form an independent opinion. We shall allow each of the three parties to state its own case; we ask but two things, attention to the facts, and impartiality in the decision. We introduce, therefore,

I.—THE HEATHEN TRADITIONS CONCERNING A UNIVERSAL FLOOD.

1. Chaldean Tradition. — The representative of the tenth generation after the first man was Xisuthrus (the son of Otiartes or Ardates), a pious and wise monarch. The god Chronos (or Belus) revealed to him that continual rains, commencing on a certain day, the fifteenth of the month Dæsius, would cause a general deluge, by which mankind would be destroyed. On the command of the deity, Xisuthrus built an immense ship, 3,000 feet in length, and 1,200 feet in breadth; ascended it with his family, his friends, and every species of quadrupeds, birds, and reptiles, after having loaded it with every possible provision, and sailed towards Armenia. When the rain ceased, he sent out birds to satisfy himself about the condition of the earth. They returned twice, but the second time they had mud on their feet; and the third time they returned to him no more. Xisuthrus, who had by this time grounded upon the side of some Armenian mountain, left the ship, accompanied only by his wife, his daughter, and the pilot. They erected an altar, and offered sacrifices to the gods; but were soon raised to heaven, on account of their exemplary piety. Those who had remained in the ship now left it, also, with many lamentations; but they believed they heard the voice of Xisuthrus admonishing them to persevere in the fear of the gods; after which they settled again in Babylon, from whence they had started, and became the ancestors of a new human population. The ship was thought to be preserved in the highland of Armenia, in the mountain of the Cordyæans; and pieces of bitumen and timber, ostensibly taken from it, were, in later times, used chiefly as amulets. We here select those features principally which offer a resemblance to the Biblical narrative; but the analogies themselves are so obvious, that the attentive reader will at once make in his mind instructive comparisons.

2. Indian Tradition.—The seventh king of the Hindoos was Satyavrata, who reigned in Dravira, a country washed by the waves of the sea. During his reign, an evil demon (Hayagriva) furtively appropriated to himself the holy books (Vedas), which the first Manu had received from Brahman; and the consequence was, that the whole human race sank into a fearful degeneracy, with the exception of the seven saints and the virtuous king, Satyavrata. The divine spirit, Vishnu, once appeared to him in the shape of a fish, and addressed him thus: "In seven days, all the creatures which have offended against me shall be destroyed by a deluge; thou alone shalt be saved in a capacious vessel, miraculously constructed. Take, therefore, all kinds of useful herbs, and of esculent grain for food, and one pair of each animal; take also the seven holy men with thee, and your wives. Go into the ark without fear; then thou shalt see god face to face, and all thy questions shall be answered." After seven days, incessant torrents of rain descended, and the ocean gave forth its waves beyond the wonted shores. Satyavrata, trembling for his imminent destruction, yet piously confiding in the promises of the god, and meditating on his attributes, saw a huge boat floating to the shore on the waters. He entered it with the saints, after having executed the divine instructions. Vishnu himself appeared, in the shape of a vast horned fish, and tied the vessel with a great sea-serpent, as with a cable, to his huge horn. He drew it for many years, and landed it, at last, on the highest peak of Mount Himavân. The flood ceased; Vishnu slew the demon, and received the Vedas back; instructed Satyavrata in all heavenly sciences, and appointed him the seventh Manu, under the name of Vaivaswata. From this Manu, the second population of the earth descended in a supernatural manner, and hence man is called *manudsha* (born of Manu, *Mensch*).

The Hindoo legend concludes, moreover, with an episode resembling, in almost every particular, that which resulted in the curse of Ham by his father Noah.

3. Greek Traditions.—The whole human race was corrupted; violence and impiety prevailed; oaths were broken; the sacredness of hospitality was shamelessly violated; suppliants were abused, or murdered; and the gods mocked and insulted. Infamy and nefariousness were the delight of the degenerated tribes. Jupiter resolved, therefore, to destroy the whole human race, as far as the earth extends and Poseidon encircles it with the girdle of the waves. The earth opened all her secret springs, the ocean sent forth its floods, and the skies poured down their endless torrents. All creatures were immersed in the waves, and perished. Deucalion alone, and his wife Pyrrha, both distinguished by their piety, were, in a small boat, which Deucalion had constructed by the advice of his father, Prometheus, carried to the lofty peaks of mount Parnassus, which alone stood out of the floods. They were saved. The waters subsided. The surviving pair sacrificed to Jupiter the flight-giving, and consulted the gods, who again, through them, populated the earth by an extraordinary miracle. This tradition appears in a still more developed form in Lucian. There was a very old temple in Hieropolis, which was universally asserted to have been built by Deucalion, the Scythian, when he had been rescued from the general deluge. For it is related that enormous crimes, prevalent through the whole human race, had provoked the wrath of Jupiter, and caused the destruction of man. Deucalion alone was found wise and pious. He built a large chest, and brought into it his wives and children; and when he was about to enter it, boars, lions, serpents, and all other animals came to him by pairs. Jupiter removed all hostile propensities from their breasts, and they lived together in miraculous concord. The waves carried the chest along till they subsided. After this, an immense gulf opened itself, which only closed after having totally absorbed the waters. This wonderful incident happened in the territory of Hieropolis; and above this gulf, Deucalion erected that ancient temple, after having offered many sacrifices on temporary altars. In commemoration of these events, twice every year water is brought into the temple, not only by the priests, but by a large concourse of strangers from Syria, Arabia, and the countries of the Jordan. This water is fetched from the sea, and then poured out in the temple in such a manner that it descends into the gulf. — The same tradition assumed, indeed, under different hands, a different local character; Hyginus mentions the Ætna, in Sicily, as the mountain where Deucalion grounded; the Phrygians relate that the wise Anakos prophesied concerning the approaching flood; and some coins struck under the emperor Septimius Severus, and some of his successors in Apamea, and declared genuine by all authorities in numismatics, represent a chest, or ark, floating on the waves, and containing a man and a woman. On the ark a bird is perched, and another is seen approaching, holding a twig with its feet. The same human pair is figured on the dry land, with up-lifted hands; and on several of those pieces even the name NO (NΩ), is clearly visible.—A legend, perhaps, as old as that of Deucalion, though neither so far spread, nor so developed, is that of *Ogyges*, who is mostly called a Bœotian autochthon, and the first ruler of the territory of Thebes, called after him Ogygia. In his time, the waters of the lake Copais are said to have risen in so unusual a degree, that they at last covered the whole surface of the earth, and that Ogyges himself directed his vessel on the waves through the air.—Even the dove of Noah bears an analogy to the dove which Deucalion is reported to have dispatched from his ark, which returned the first time, thus indicating that the stores of rain were not yet exhausted, but which did not come back the second time, and thereby gave proof that the skies had resumed their usual serenity.

4. American and other Traditions. — Humboldt found the tradition of a general deluge vividly entertained among the wild races peopling the regions of the

Orinoco; it belongs to the historical reminiscences of almost all the tribes of the Indians of the North-American lakes, and of the inhabitants of Tahiti; but the legends of the Tamanacs are peculiarly interesting. They relate that a man and a woman saved themselves in that fearful catastrophe; they took refuge on a high mountain; and when, after the floods had subsided, they wished to re-people the earth, they cast behind them, over their heads, the fruits of the Mauritia palm-tree, from the seeds of which men and women were produced. The analogy to the Greek myth is obvious. On the other hand, the traditions of the Peruvians, Brazilians, Mexicans, Cubans, and others, are so evidently traceable to the Mosaic narrative, or are so entirely fabulous, that, though interesting in themselves, they do not contribute to illustrate our text in any material way; whilst the allusions found in the sacred books of the Chinese and Persians are too indistinct, or unauthentic, to offer any clear parallel; and the Egyptian traditions speak only of repeated calamities inflicted upon the earth by fire and water.

It is unnecessary to observe, that there is scarcely a single feature in the Biblical account which is not discovered in one, or several of the heathen traditions. And the coincidences are not limited to desultory details; they extend to the whole outlines, and the very tenor and spirit of the narrative; it is almost everywhere the sin of man which renders the determination of the all-just judge irrevocable; one pious man is saved, with his family, to form the nucleus of a new population; an ark is introduced, and pairs of the whole animal creation are collected; birds are sent out to ascertain the condition of the earth; an altar is built, and sacrifices are offered. And yet it is certain that none of these accounts are derived from the pages of the Bible; they are independent of each other; their differences are as striking and characteristic as their analogies; they are echoes of a sound which had long vanished away. . It would be miraculous to suppose that such a remarkable concurrence is accidental; the legends of the Chaldeans and the Mosaic narrative, bear not only a family likeness, but they have the very appearance of twins. There must indisputably have been a common basis, a universal source. And this source is the general tradition of primitive generations. The harmony between all these accounts is an undeniable guarantee that the tradition is no idle invention; a fiction is individual, not universal; that tradition has, therefore, a historical foundation; it is the result of an event which really happened in the ages of the childhood of mankind; it was altered, adorned, and it may be magnified, by the dissemination; it was tinctured with a specifically national colouring by the different nations; it borrowed some characteristic traits from every country in which it was diffused; it assumed the reflex of the various religious systems; but though the features were modified, the general character was indestructible, and remained strikingly visible. But in order to arrive at a well-established result, we must examine the testimony of geology, a science which stands in immediate connection with our subject. We return, therefore, once more to that rich and interesting field, every stone of which is a silent witness of millenniums, and an eloquent preceptor of wisdom.

II.—GEOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS.

We shall, in the precisest form possible, state the results of modern geology bearing upon the question of a universal deluge, about 1,600 years after the birth of the first human pair.

1. The surface of the earth is, in many vast tracts, covered with accumulations of soil, sand, and gravel; they have no connection with the rock formations of the former ages; and are generally known under the name of *diluvium*, since they are believed to be the result of some vast flood. But these aggregations were indisputably produced by *many* currents of *different* force, and from *different* directions; they are the result

of *different* ages, and are all of a *local* extent; they have, in some cases, been washed away by some new current; they are, in other instances, overlaid by more recent drifts; they are produced by the long action of the floods working from deep waters, by currents, eddies, and tides; they are, in fact, nothing but a part of the ordinary and uninterrupted process by which the continents have gradually formed and been elevated during unnumbered ages.—There is, therefore, no probability whatever that this diluvium is the result of a transitory and general deluge.

2. Cuvier, indeed, agreed with Deluc and Dolmieu, that the surface of our globe underwent a great and sudden revolution, the date of which he referred to a period not much earlier than five or six thousand years ago; he considered the deposits of the diluvium and alluvium, as the completest proof, to the senses, of that inundation; though he was convinced, that this sudden catastrophe was *not universal*. Other geologists adopted the same opinion; they identified the last geological revolution with the deluge of Genesis; and explained all phenomena on this hypothesis. But, the most distinguished of these scholars, and Buckland foremost among them, later retracted this opinion as absolutely untenable, and as perfectly irreconcileable with obvious facts. A temporary deluge could never have produced the geological changes observable in the superficial deposits. The animals whose remains have been discovered in the "mammaliferous crag," not only of Great Britain, but of Northern Siberia, the elephant, the rhinoceri, the hippopotamus, the hyenas and tigers, cannot have been transported thither by the Flood from the intertropical regions; this is not merely *improbable* on account of the vast distance of four to five thousand miles which separates those respective lands; or on account of the great numbers in which they are found in the same localities; or on account of the remarkable circumstance, that the *shed* antlers of the great Irish elk, which exceeded, in bulk and size, the largest horses, and measured upwards of ten feet in height, occur everywhere, and mostly in an uninjured state, *together with* the bones and skeletons of that animal: but it is rendered *impossible* by the facts, that they are extant in beds of various ages; and still more by the observations of comparative anatomy; for, the latter has shown, beyond a doubt, that those northern animals were very widely different, in their internal structure, and their external provisions, from the same species now living in the southern climes; the difference is greater than between an ass and a horse, or between the dog and the wolf; and it is certain beyond contradiction, that those animals lived and died in the northern countries in which their remains have been found.—It is known, that the cavern of Kirkdale, in Yorkshire, contains the bones and remains of twenty-four species of animals, from the pigeon and the mouse, to the hyena, the hippopotamus, and rhinoceros. But the opening of the cavern is not larger than four feet; the huge bones cannot, therefore, have been washed thither by the tropical waves; they are, besides, almost all of them *gnawed*, and show the clear marks of teeth, especially of hyenas, which in that haunt probably devoured their prey.

3. The violent irruptions of water, and the up-heavings proceeding from the interior of the earth, have alternately, and an indefinite number of times, immersed and elevated the same tract of land; every new geological period is marked by such an event; the same part of the earth's surface was more than once sea and dry land; but the last revolution of this kind occurred before the existence of man on earth; in no stratum of the earth, not even the very highest tertiary beds, have remains of human bodies or of human works been discovered; they occur only in the loose sand and gravel which cover the surface. It has, indeed, been alleged, that human bones have been found in earlier rocks. But those instances are uncertain; and have been declared inconclusive by almost all geological authorities. Man was called into being after the earth had carried its development forward to its present state. No deluge destroyed, therefore, a wicked and disobedient race of men.

4. The Biblical narrative relates, that all the species of animals were preserved by Noah, and that they later propagated themselves; it implies, that the deluge was no violent convulsion or catastrophe, that it did not change the aspect of nature; although it destroyed the living beings on the earth, it left no trace of its existence on the surface or in the interior; it was an event of the existing creation; the vegetable kingdom remained, essentially, uninjured; and the soil was soon afterwards fit for cultivation.

An attempt has, indeed, been made to represent the Deluge as an event of the greatest importance for the geological structure of the earth. For, the following theory has been proposed and extensively adopted. The primitive rocks were formed on the first day of Creation, by means of the "light," which is considered equivalent with *fire*; the deposits of marine animals and shell-fish were formed during the 1,650 years which intervened between the Creation and the deluge; *but all the other geological revolutions and layers are the consequences of the Flood;* the different formations of the stratified rocks of immense thickness and very great variety are the results of *successive smaller convulsions*, both volcanic and aquatic, which took place during the year of the deluge.—But the deluge is, in no part of the Biblical narrative, described as having been attended by "tremendous convulsions," volcanic eruptions, electric agencies, or violent up-heavings. The vegetable and animal life alone was destroyed upon the earth; but the general surface of the latter remained unaltered; and a very short time sufficed to restore, in every respect, the former order of things; the annihilation of the organic creatures did not materially or lastingly affect the nature of the inorganic part of our globe.

But the theory in question is preposterous in a geological point of view also. For, the fossil remains preserved in these successive stratifications include animals which had enjoyed life during a long series of years; they contain trees, the concentric rings of which indicate the number of years which they had required for their growth; the chemical causes, together with the "volcanic, voltaic, and electric action" to which those marvellous results are ascribed, are not only an arbitrary assumption against the clear statements of the text; but would certainly have succeeded each other in such fearful rapidity and violence, that the preservation of Noah's ark, under such circumstances, would be the most extraordinary miracle which ever suspended the course of nature; the tertiary layers alone are irresistible witnesses of their slow origin and their overwhelming age, and overthrow at once that unnatural and artificial edifice which prejudice and weakness have erected. If it is averred, that all those convulsions were designedly produced by the immediate direction of the Divine omnipotence, we are justified to ask, what was the end and the use of those awful destructions? Why were myriads of majestic animals created, only to be annihilated in terrific haste? Why are no human bones found in the lower strata? Noah took specimens of all animals existing in his time into the ark, for the express purpose of securing the continuance of their species; and yet, the various layers enclose many species which are at present extinct: for, the opinion, that they ceased to exist after the Noachian deluge, is equally against the tenor of the Bible. It is, therefore, but a fanciful conception to suppose, that the continents of the earth were depressed to the depth of the present ocean's bed; that, after the deluge, a new bed was sunk for the ocean; whilst the former bed of the sea, either wholly or partially, constitutes the present continents and islands. The Noachian flood was intended to annihilate the human race, not to mark a new epoch in the geological history of our planet. All those conjectures are merely invented in order to prove, at all hazards, a preconceived opinion, both against the clear words of the Scriptures, and the facts of the positive sciences. — It is painful to see how even sober minds throw themselves into a hopeless struggle; they attempt to combine what judgment and reason will never be able to unite; they will not consent to

yield, even if concession after concession should be wrested from them; they prefer to defy reason with narrow-minded obstinacy; and weave a tissue of contradictions, alike incapable to support the truth of religion, and to elevate the dignity of science.

5. The older lateral cones of Mount Ætna are, after a moderate computation, at least twelve thousand years old; they are composed of the ordinary incoherent materials; and yet, they show in no part marks of denudation; they retain in integrity their original shape; a devastating deluge cannot, therefore, have passed over them within that period.

6. In the centre of France, in the provinces of Auvergne and Languedoc, are still the remains of several hundred volcanic hills and mountains. The craters, some of which are higher than that of the Vesuvius, ejected immense masses of lava to the heights of fifty, one hundred, and many more feet, and spreading over many miles of area. Distant periods separate the different eruptions. Distinct mineral formations, and an abundance of petrified vegetable and animal life, bespeak an epoch far anterior to the present condition of our planet. And yet, since these volcanoes ceased to flow, rivers have worked their way through that vast depth of lava; they have penetrated through basalt rocks one hundred and fifty feet in height, and have even considerably entered into the granite rocks beneath. The time required for such operation is immeasurably slow. Centuries are required to mark the least perceptible progress. The whole period which was necessary for the rivers to overcome that hard and compact mass, is large almost beyond the conception of man; all our measures of chronology are insufficient; and the mind stands amazed at the notion of eternal time. That extraordinary region contains rocks, consisting of laminated formations of siliceous deposits; one of the rocks is sixty feet in thickness; and a moderate calculation shows, that at least 18,000 years were required to produce that single pile. All these formations, therefore, are far more remote than the date of the Noachian flood; they show not the slightest trace of having been affected or disturbed by any general deluge; their progress has been slow, but uninterrupted; even the pumice-stone, and other loose and light substances, with which many of those hills and the cones of the volcanic craters are covered, and which would have been washed away by the action of a flood, have remained entirely untouched.

Geological evidence denies, therefore, the possibility of a universal deluge, both in general, and especially within the last five thousand years. But we have seen above, that an historical tradition must necessarily be acknowledged as the basis of our narrative; the unanimity in the legends of the most different nations demands that supposition; and we do not see that geology excludes it. Though human bones have not been excavated in the stratified beds, those which occur in the alluvial sands are sufficient to show the possibility of a revolution on the earth's surface during the existence of man. It is in no way improbable to conjecture, that during the limited number of millenniums during which man inhabits the earth, its surface suffered one of those changes which have, in former periods, been repeated innumerable times, and which are imperceptibly preparing themselves in the silent womb of time. A local deluge may have swept away the inhabitants of a large district; this territory was, perhaps, believed to have been the only one yet peopled on the surface of the globe; a few only survived; and the persons so providentially delivered from a general ruin preserved the memory of the event, which the innate religious sentiment of man soon ennobled with higher motives, and rendered subservient to fruitful lessons of virtue and morality.

But in advocating the originally local character of the tradition, we are far from maintaining that the Bible represents it as such. Some interpreters have, indeed, forced the Hebrew narrative into this meaning. They have thereby violated all the rules of a sound philology. They have distorted the spirit of the language, and dis-

regarded the dictates of common sense. It is impossible to read the narrative of our chapter without being irresistibly impressed that the *whole* earth was destined for destruction. This is so evident throughout the whole of the description, that it is unnecessary to adduce single instances. Such expressions as, "*all* the mountains were covered by the floods," are asserted to mean a *great part* of them. But all the passages which have been collected to prove that application of the term *all* in Hebrew, are far from being conclusive analogies. In our case, the universality does not lie in the words merely, but in the tenor of the whole narrative. *All* flesh had corrupted its way before the Lord upon the earth; therefore the *whole* human race was to be destroyed with the earth. We need not even urge the reasons adduced by others, that if the flood had been local, it would have been unnecessary to encumber the ark with birds so widely diffused as the raven and the dove; or that, if the waters rose fifteen cubits above the highest mountains of the then inhabited countries, their level would have been sufficient to give universality to the deluge. These arguments, whether borne out by the natural sciences or not, are unnecessary. The text admits of no other acceptation, but a universal flood. It is difficult to know to what extent the earth was at the time of the deluge inhabited by man; whether the population was limited, and whether the prevailing violence and warfare had incessantly tended to diminish it. The text speaks of the *whole* earth, and of *all* creation. It evidently pre-supposes that the whole of its surface was peopled by human beings; for God intended to destroy the whole earth on account of man's iniquity. The supposition of the local character of the Noachian deluge, is analogous to the preposterous assertion, that the first chapters of Genesis do not treat of the creation of heaven and earth, but of the formation of some limited district by an internal convulsion of our planet. Thus the Creation and the deluge would belong to almost the same class of geological events; for the submergence of the dry land, and the rise of the floods, stand in the relation of cause and effect; a creation and a deluge are inseparable occurrences. Nothing but utter perplexity could have brought intelligent minds to maintain such untenable views. For we find among its supporters a Matthew Poole, a Stillingfleet, and a Le Clerc; and J. Pye Smith, Hitchcock, Hugh Miller, and others, have followed in their deceptive traces. It required, on the part of the advocates of a local deluge, but one hazardous step more, actually to assign for it a precise region, either in the southern part of Western Asia, or in the plains of Armenia, or in a "trench-like strip of country that communicated between the Caspian and the Gulf of Finland."

The question then stands thus: Geology teaches the impossibility of a universal deluge since the last 6,000 years, but does not exclude a partial destruction of the earth's surface within that period. The Biblical text, on the other hand, demands the supposition of a universal deluge, and absolutely excludes a partial flood. How is this difficulty to be reconciled? The only solution possible is by consistently carrying out the principle of Biblical interpretation, which has hitherto guided us. We acknowledge the historical connection between the Hebrews and the other eastern nations. We admit an analogy between the writings of the former and the traditions of the latter; but we distinguish between the form and the spirit; between the materials and the ideas, for the embodiment of which they were employed. The Old Testament does not show the ancient Hebrews as superior to their contemporaries in secular knowledge. They were not above them in the physical sciences; they shared, in positive learning, nearly all their notions, and a great portion of their errors. But they surpassed them infinitely in religious contemplation; they alone shook off the fetters of superstition; they conquered idolatry, and rose to the purest notions concerning the attributes of God and the duties of man. The religious lessons, therefore, which the history of the Noachian deluge discloses, are its chief value, and form its only remarkable difference from the many similar traditions of ancient tribes; and

they are by no means affected by the question, whether the deluge was partial or universal. The Biblical narrative is based upon a historical fact. But this fact was, in the course of time, amplified and adorned, till it was, in the period of the author of the Pentateuch, generally augmented into a universal flood; he employed the materials in the form in which they had become the common legendary property of nations; but, with his usual wisdom and comprehensiveness of mind, he worked them out into a powerful link of his grand religious system; they became, in his hand, the foundation of a new covenant between God and man.

III.—GENERAL DIFFICULTIES.

But the literal interpretation of the Biblical narrative presents other and great difficulties, which have not been urged by sceptics alone; nor are they of recent date; they have, at a very early period, been acknowledged, not without anxiety and sorrow, by strong pillars of the Church; they have sometimes been argued away by every effort of pious ingenuity, but they have as frequently been abandoned as insolvable mysteries. We shall mention the chief of those difficulties.

1. The waters are represented to have covered the earth to the height of fifteen cubits above the tops of the mountains (vii. 20; viii. 5). This would require, at least, eight times the aggregate quantity of water contained in all the seas and oceans of the earth. But the rain can, even if the clouds at once discharge all their stores, cause a water-sheet of only a few inches in thickness; and the sea might spread its floods over the earth, but it does not thereby increase the actual amount of water. It has, indeed, been replied to this objection, that the water of the oceans, even independently of the rain, was sufficient to immerse the highest mountains; for it is said that the antediluvian peaks were not by far so high as those of the present era, and that the tremendous convulsions of the deluge were the originating causes of the highest mountains, as the Chimborazo, Hecla, and the Himalayan range. But the total erroneousness of this opinion has above been proved.

2. The sudden addition of so great a mass of water would materially change the action of gravity upon the earth; the nutation of the axis would be varied; and not only the orbit of our planet, but the whole solar system must be deranged.

3. The ark was to contain one pair of every species of unclean animals, and seven pairs of every clean species. Now there are already known upwards of 1,600 species of Mammalia, 6,200 of birds, 600 of reptiles, 5,000 of conchylia, besides the almost endless number of insects, vermes, and infusoria. The ark, though of large dimensions, even granted that Noah was able to build it, and that the animals did not multiply during the deluge, was far from being capacious enough to receive all those creatures, together with the enormous quantity of food necessary for the extent of a whole year. It has been maintained, that the Biblical text speaks only of a limited number of *useful* and *domesticated* animals, which lived in the immediate vicinity of Noah, or in the small district then inhabited by man. But this assertion forms a part of that unwarranted opinion concerning a local deluge, which we have above attempted to refute.

4. Most animals can live in a certain zone only; they perish if suddenly transported into an ungenial climate. It would imply a perversion of all laws of physiology, to suppose that the thousands of animals coming from remote regions, could be preserved in the ark without injury to life or vigour. Many of the insects have no wings; many live but a few days, or even a few hours after they have obtained their wings; it is beyond our comprehension how they could, after the flood, have reached the distant clime suitable to their existence. The original centres of distribution were necessarily more than one, since every great continent has its own peculiar fauna, which occupied

the circles round those centres in ages long anterior to the deluge. But the miracles required to produce all those wonderful effects are a gratuitous supposition.

5. It is a matter of great difficulty to understand how the large quantity of meat necessary for the subsistence of so many flesh-eating animals could be preserved for a twelvemonth. To obviate this objection, another miracle has been invented on which the Bible is perfectly silent, namely, that those animals, during this time, entirely changed their nature, and were satisfied with vegetable food. But even the herbivorous animals, in many instances, live only on a restricted number of plants, which again occur only in limited, and often remote localities.

6. A very great part of the fishes, which are never mentioned in our narrative, because they were believed to have remained uninjured by the deluge, could not live in the water, the nature of which was so materially altered by the enormous mixture of rain and sea-floods. Salt water, if suddenly introduced into fresh, destroys the inhabitants of the latter, and many of the marine fishes and mollusks can only live in salt water. It has been conjectured, that the spawn of the fishes might have been preserved even if the living individuals perished; but the spawn would, in a universal deluge, have lost its vitality, or have been developed into fishes long before the expiration of the year; so that these individuals also would have perished.

7. There are trees still existing older than the date of the Noachian deluge. If they had been submersed in water, they would scarcely, even had they outlived that catastrophe, have maintained the strength necessary to carry their existence through so many millenniums. Of the hundred thousand species of known plants, very few would survive submersion for a whole year; at least three-fourths of them would necessarily have perished in a universal deluge. It is agreed by all botanical authorities, that though partial inundations of rivers do not long, or materially change the vegetation of a region, the infusion of great quantities of *salt-water* destroys it entirely for long periods. But the earth produced the olive-tree and the vine immediately after the cessation of the deluge.

We have faithfully stated some of the obvious difficulties, omitting the great number of minor objections which have been raised from the time of Origen; we search after truth, and are determined to examine without prejudice. We now entreat our readers to weigh calmly the arguments and facts here produced; the general tradition of all nations proves the historical character of a deluge, but geology denies its universality; this circumstance, added to the combined weight of the internal and unanswerable discrepancies, makes it manifest that the Biblical narrative, with regard to the *facts*, is to be estimated like other analogous traditions of the ancient writers; though the *religious truths* which it contains, belong to the most important parts of the Biblical canon.

CHAPTER IX.

1. And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth. 2. And

1—4. The animal creation had received the Divine blessing; the stability of the earth had been guaranteed; it now remained to pronounce a benediction over them for whose sake both the animal tribes and the earth had been preserved. Noah had proved himself worthy of the Divine love, which, moreover, was promised henceforth to hold precedence over iron-handed justice; and the mercy of God shone upon him and his house. The history of man starts with Noah from a second beginning; it was, therefore, necessary to renew his dominion over the brute creation; and this is done in almost the same, but rather more energetic terms, than those

the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, on all that moveth *upon* the earth, and on all the fishes of the

applied in the corresponding act at the time of Adam (i. 28). The fear and terror of man shall be upon the beasts and fowls, and the fishes shall be delivered up into his hands. These strong expressions easily prepare us for the very striking change which now takes place in the relation between men and beasts. Hitherto, man had been ordained to rule over the animals, and to apply them for his use; but he had no authority over their lives, except for sacrifices, and, of course, if he was forced to repel their attacks; he was assigned to live exclusively on the vegetable produce, although he was thereby exposed to a perpetual struggle with the reluctant soil. It was, however, believed, that the Adamites in their universal degeneracy were not satisfied to use the milk, or the wool, or the labour of the animals; they longed after their flesh also: and how should generations, among which the murder of fellow-men was a familiar crime, refrain from killing those beings over which they believed themselves to possess an unlimited right? This appetite, once awakened, could not easily be eradicated; the custom had, through many centuries, taken too deep a root; it was, therefore, again an act of Divine compassion over human weakness, legally to allow animal food, the enjoyment of which would, without this sanction, for ever have been a crime. Thus, the permission to kill animals has remained as a standing monument of the inveterate depravity of the antediluvian generations; it is a concession made to man, because "the cogitation of his heart is evil from his youth"; it is the inheritance from an age of violence; and, though violence can, in itself, never assume the character of innocence, it ceases, according to our passage, at least to be a sin against the Divine will. However, we are here also not left without an allusion to disclose to us the true meaning of that permission. Every living creature was allowed for food, like the herbs in former times (see i. 29); but—the flesh *with its soul*, that is, its blood, shall not be eaten (ver. 4). The animals are not unrestrictedly permitted like vegetable food; they are not considered as mere objects; they are living beings, *endowed with a soul* which is to be respected, and which is holy, since it proceeds from God; and, as the blood was considered to contain the principle of life, it was rigorously forbidden on penalty of death; which prohibition is repeated in the New Testament among the essential laws. The eating of the blood of animals was, indeed, considered equivalent to murder, and was visited with the most awful Divine judgments. Thus, at least one faint reminiscence was left to recall the original inviolability of every animal life; it is the glimmering spark which may once be rekindled to a full flame; and this will take place in the Messianic times, when even the beasts of prey will cease to feed by murder, but will eat grass like the ox and the lamb.

Originally, when the fruits and herbs were destined for the food of man, the grass was left for the subsistence of the animals (i. 29, 30). But, while it is related, that later, as a consequence of increasing degeneracy, man consumed the flesh of animals also, and that this change was confirmed by God; the author is entirely silent with regard to the period when, in his opinion, the animals ceased to content themselves with vegetable productions, and began to devour the flesh of other animals. This is the only deficiency in this part of his composition, otherwise so complete. Many have thought themselves at liberty to conjecture, that he considered the sanguinary nature of the animals to have been a consequence of the fall of man. But, though this opinion is not against the spirit of the Old Testament, we must repeat, that the remotest allusion is wanting to prove it. It would, moreover,

sea; into your hand are they delivered. 3. Every moving thing that liveth shall be to you for food; as the green herb I give you all *things*. 4. Only flesh with its soul,

compel us to the supposition, that the organisation of the carnivorous animals was, before the fall, widely different from that which they at present possess; a supposition against which the natural sciences would rise with a unanimous protest. The account of the Creation once finished, the Bible pursues exclusively the history of man; and the animals, for their own sake, engage its attention again, only when it pourtrays the ideal future, with its universal peace and perfect happiness. We may add the doctrine of the Zend Books, that, at the end of time, men will cease to eat meat; they will live upon fruit and milk alone; after a short period, they will exchange milk for water; till, at last, they will require no physical food whatever. This analogy is interesting in more than one respect.

As Moses expressly permitted the flesh of animals, we are justified in seeking, in this ordinance, a practical religious idea; his laws are almost invariably enjoined in clear and conscious opposition to pagan abuses; his precepts, besides their positive value, are arrows directed against superstition. A chief reason of animal worship among the Egyptians, and later among the Pythagoreans, was the belief of the transmigration of souls, which, it was supposed, pass into the bodies of animals, and are, after the lapse of many years only, permitted to re-enter a human form; hence, it was an abomination to kill animals, and to eat their flesh; and, hence, the most scrupulous attention was bestowed upon them; and, though in Egypt not all animals were sacred in the same district, yet there was scarcely an animal which was not worshipped in some part of the country. Astrology, also, was connected with animal-worship; for, to each planet an animal was dedicated, which was considered to be chiefly connected with that heavenly body; and the veneration for animals thus became still more intense, dangerous, and fanatical. — Nor are the other reasons, which ancient writers assign for animal-worship, less absurd and objectionable; one, which seems to have obtained great currency, was, that the gods, when once compelled to flee before the attack of the giants, assumed the forms of various animals, and that gratitude induced them, later, to command their veneration and worship. — If some animals are of special service and utility to some countries; if, for instance, the ibis kills the winged serpents, and the ichneumon destroys the eggs of the crocodile: the Bible denies that this gives man a right to declare them as Divine beings; to assign whole provinces for their sustenance; to offer to them voluntary gifts in gold and silver; to collect alms for them; to bathe and to anoint them; to cover them with rich garments, and to place them on luxurious cushions; to erect for them magnificent temples, and to scent the air which they inhale with the most costly perfumes; to bewail their death more than that of a man; to punish those who kill them as impious murderers, and to visit even their undesigned destruction; to embalm their bodies, and to entomb them in beautiful sarcophagi with lavish expence. The beasts are, according to the Mosaic doctrine, beings that owe the breath of their life to the omnipotence of God; to Him they are indebted for all their instincts; and, if these serve the use and advantage of man, they fulfil merely their natural destiny; and the honour belongs to Him alone who has endowed them with those wonderful powers.—It was necessary, to eradicate the obnoxious superstition of animal-worship, which had spread in many repulsive forms; and to impress upon the Hebrews, that the soul of man, whose prototype is God Himself, can never be so degraded as to dwell in the body of an animal; that it returns to God who has given it; and that, therefore, *for such reason*, the animals

which is its blood, you shall not eat.—5. And surely your blood for your lives shall I require; at the hand of every beast shall I require it, and at the hand of man; at the

deserve no regard. The desire of enjoining this important doctrine, may have induced the prudent legislator to yield the more readily to the encroaching custom of eating animal food.—The very command, that man should *subject* the animals to himself, and rule over them (i. 28), excludes the idea of animal-worship; the lords cannot lower themselves to be slaves; those who decide over the destiny of the beasts, cannot expect from them their fate; and, in order to be humane to animals, it is not necessary to raise them to the rank of gods. Thus, the creation offers other collateral truths of the highest importance; the earth, the water, the sun, and the stars are all created things, called into being by the sole command and will of God; it was, therefore, impossible to deify or to worship them.

5—7. But though God declared man the ruler over the animals, he did not allow him dominion over his fellow-creatures. He did not sanction any form of slavery; "Man over man he made not lord: such title to Himself reserving, human left from human free." If, therefore, bloodshed practised against animals was permitted on account of human "hard-heartedness," the whole severity of the Divine wrath was poured out against him who kills a fellow-man. The blood of a human being cries for revenge to heaven; the soul of the slain raises its voice; the blood of the innocent victim hangs at the skirts of the murderer's garments; the blood is identical with the life of the individual itself. This view was not unfamiliar to other ancient nations; for in the Egyptian hieroglyphics, the hawk, which was believed to feed upon blood alone, represents the human soul; Aristotle considered the blood as the seat of the soul; whilst Empedocles limited it to the blood of the heart; Virgil speaks of an effusion of the "purple soul"; it was the doctrine of Critias, that blood is the soul; and of Pythagoras, that the soul is nourished by the blood. The vital principle, or the *soul* lies in an unsubstantial breath; it is invisible; and moves the organism after laws which will eternally remain a secret, known to the Creator alone: but as its visible representative, the *blood* was considered, in which the physical power is concentrated: for a diminution of blood is attended with a decrease of the vital powers, and at last with dissolution and death. The breath is purely spiritual, and comes from God; the blood is a physical element, of earthly material; the former is indestructible, and escapes, when the latter "is shed;" but as it has once been the medium through which the vigour of the soul manifested itself, it is an object of sacredness, and is, not inappropriately, itself called the soul. But it is remarkable, that the Bible never attributes to the blood a higher mental power, nor does it ever identify the blood with the *spirit*, but invariably represents it as the principle of *physical* life. Blood would defile the earth if it remained unpunished; not only a man who has murdered must suffer death, but a beast also, which in the fury of its nature has shed human blood, must be removed from the earth; the principle, that "he who sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed," is of universal application, and admits of no exception; for the murder of a man is the destruction of one who bears the Divine image: it is a crime against the majesty of God Himself. This is the inexorable retaliation of the Mosaic law. It was dictated both by justice and necessity; and this severity was, in the age of Noah, the more indispensable for the safety of the human race, as in general the exercise of mercy had been proclaimed by God. But let us pursue that ordinance more deeply, and try to seize its internal motive.

The criminal code of Moses knew only

hand of the brother of every one shall I require the life of man. 6. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made He man. 7. And you, be fruitful and multiply; increase abun-

two principal modes of punishment, a pecuniary fine and capital punishment: imprisonment, with or without hard labour, was never resorted to. Prisons for public offenders were nowhere ordered by Moses, though they were, in later periods, introduced by the arbitrariness of the kings; and detention of an accused till the judicial decision was pronounced, is once mentioned in the Pentateuch. In so primitive a legislation as that of Moses, the complicated and expensive system of incarceration could find no place; the maintenance of prisons would have required a perfectly different organization; they were utterly impossible in the forty years of the wandering life in the desert; and the example of Moses was in this, as in many other respects, the guiding principle for succeeding generations. Now, the punishment of murder by a pecuniary fine, which is admitted by the Mohammedan law, would not only be revolting to all feelings of justice, but it would be extremely dangerous for the safety of society, it would destroy the equality of the rich and the poor before the law, and would necessarily lead to a fatal deterioration of public morality. The stability of the state demands that an insidious murderer should be removed and made innoxious; it would be a fatal offence against the first elements of civil government, not to prevent so dangerous a criminal to repeat his nefarious violence. But since a pecuniary fine is utterly objectionable, there remained, *for the Mosaic system*, no other alternative but death. But the principles pervading the Law are not rigid and inflexible; they were applied after their spirit rather than their letter, and they were adapted to the nature of the individual cases. A few observations will raise this opinion beyond a doubt. Strict measure for measure is the fundamental idea of the penal code of the Pentateuch; and yet it is certain that the law of "eye for eye, tooth for tooth," etc., was clearly understood to mean, that *pecuniary* compensation was exacted for the mutilation of a member. Involuntary homicide was not punished with death, as among the Arabs; here the severe rule, "he who sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed," found no application; a safe flight was permitted to the cities of refuge, which approach, indeed, in their nature, the nearest to imprisonment, although the stay in those cities was not deemed ignominious, but the effect of an inscrutable Divine decree. It is, therefore, perfectly in accordance with the spirit of the Mosaic law, to suppose that capital punishment would have been changed into some other mode of removing the criminal from society, if such expedient had existed, or had been in harmony with the popular notions. For we must remind the reader, that the civil laws of Moses generally reform old institutions, rather than create new ones. It is, for instance, unquestionable, that although Moses was strongly averse to the barbarous custom of revenge of blood, he did not deem it possible to abolish it, but was contented with bringing it into reasonable limits. Sometimes he exercised this principle of conformation even in purely moral laws, as, for instance, by not interdicting polygamy, though clearly and emphatically representing monogamy as the highest form of matrimony. Further, the Mosaic laws, though severe in *punishing*, never intend to *take revenge*. Hence it follows, that though the introduction of imprisonment, which had been so hateful to them in the Egyptian legislation, would have been abhorrent to their national sentiments, it would in every respect have been efficient. For it frees the citizens from the dangerous presence of a felon, and is a

dantly on the earth, and multiply thereon.—8. And God spoke to Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, 9. And, behold, I establish My covenant with you, and with your seed after you; 10. And with every living creature that

continued and deterring punishment for an atrocious crime. Excluded from the contact with the world, toiling in unceasing fatigues, which perpetually remind him of his misdeed, and clearly conscious of the horror with which his name is regarded, the imprisoned murderer suffers greater torments than an instantaneous death, necessarily facilitated by the progress of humanity, can possibly inflict. Nor is the retaliation wanting which is certainly expressed in our text (ver. 6). Liberty is, according to the Mosaic conceptions, the seal of our Divine nature; to serve no other master but God alone, was the glory of the Hebrew citizen; those who preferred slavery were branded with a mark of ignominy; they lost, thereby, that Divine stamp; they were degraded and deprived of every higher claim. Slavish imprisonment, therefore, is essentially also a forfeiture of the Divine image, and would be an equivalent and appropriate punishment of the offender, who by malice and violence has destroyed the Divine image in a fellow-man.

We have proposed this opinion after carefully weighing its details; for no more important legal question agitates the present generation than that regarding capital punishment; and we leave it to the reflecting reader to judge how far, according the arguments here brought forward, the Mosaic law is decisive for or against it. The stress of the prohibition expressed in our text seems to lie on quite a different point. In many ancient polities, the punishment for murder was left to the vengeance of the kinsmen of the victim, because their zeal was supposed to be more efficient than any vigilance on the part of the state could be. But, the relatives might, in some instances, be base, or indifferent, or bribed by the assassin; in such cases, even the authorities had no right to take cognisance of the crime; and the murderer remained unpunished and unmolested. Moses wished to prevent such enormities; he proclaimed as a decided principle, that every murder must be avenged; that no blood must remain unatoned; the murderer must, in all cases, suffer the deserved punishment, whether the relatives take the initiative or not.—After the diminution of the human race by murderous atrocity has been interdicted in the most solemn terms, as it would counteract the Divine blessing, the promise of a rapid increase is repeated with an abundance of synonymous expressions (ver. 7); which "covenant" was not forgotten in later times (Lev. xxvi. 9).

8—17. The last traces of the universal flood had disappeared; Noah had testified his piety and gratitude by a magnificent sacrifice, which God had accepted with benevolence; solemn blessings had been pronounced upon the animal creation and upon the human race, and sacred duties were enforced as the first conditions for the permanence and happiness of regenerated society. God had even promised, that He would never again punish the earth with a similar calamity, but that henceforward the regular course of nature should be uninterruptedly preserved (viii. 21, 22). The covenant between God and man was thus concluded; and nothing was left but to *ratify* it. This gracious act is now performed with repeated and heart-cheering promises; and the Divine love, which is in future to preside over human destinies, sends its first genial rays. The animals are naturally included in this beautiful deed of conciliation; they had also been smitten by God's anger; they are now to share His mercy: the earth, man, and animals, are bound together in a mysterious but indestructible tie. But it might seem, that a covenant is reciprocal; that, therefore, God granted these promises only

is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every living being of the earth. 11. And I shall establish My covenant with you; and no more shall all flesh be annihilated by the waters of a flood; nor shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. 12. And God said, This *is* the sign of the covenant which I give between Me and you, and every living creature that *is* with you,

in return for certain pledges on the part of the human family; and it has been asserted, that the laws just enjoined, regarding the blood of animals, and murder, form the duties of man, the observance of which alone secures the perpetuity of the covenant. But this opinion rests on a misconception of the spirit of this section. The great principle which it teaches is, that God's mercy watches benignly over human affairs; that it gives all blessings, although man may not deserve them on account of his sins; His justice has been merged in His love; He knows the weakness of human nature, and is, therefore, aware how little He can expect from its energy; but He is also conscious of its Divine longings, and does not fear any more an unnatural or permanent aberration from the path of rectitude. He confides in the power of the human mind, and has compassion with the frailty of the human heart, which He knows cannot long revolt against the gently commanding voice of virtue. Individuals may degenerate into monsters, but mankind in general cannot obliterate the Divine image impressed on every countenance. God, therefore, demanded no counter-promise or pledge when He concluded, through Noah, His covenant with the *whole human race;* although He made His covenant with *individuals* or *single nations* strictly dependent on their piety and obedience. This distinction is clear in itself, and is obvious in many Biblical passages. When the prophet Isaiah dilates upon God's unceasing mercy towards Israel, and promises its final redemption, he continues: "For this is as the waters of Noah to me; for, as I have sworn that the waters of Noah shall no more come over the earth, so have I sworn no more to be angry or wroth with thee." God extends here to Israel the same unlimited grace which He had guaranteed to mankind in general, in the confident hope, that His people would no more forget Him and His Law. For, their land had been converted into a desert, and the people had been carried into captivity, because they had neglected His precepts, or "destroyed the eternal covenant," which they had made with God when He revealed, and they had promised to keep, the Law, or the "Book of the Covenant." In this alliance between God and Israel there was, indeed, reciprocity; and it was dissolved as soon as the latter ceased to walk in the ways of piety. — The "covenant" of God is frequently only the kindness which He bestows; thus, when He intended to destroy the earth by water, He "made a covenant with Noah" (vi.18), which implied a promise of deliverance from the floods; and, in our passage, God does not only make a covenant with the human family, but also "with every living creature, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth" (ver. 10), a sufficient proof, that the promises of the Noachic covenant were not reciprocal. It is, then, not only eternal (viii. 22), but universal; it applies to the whole earth; it is made with all living beings; some parts of this planet's surface may be desolated by the Divine anger; tribes may be extirpated, and nations be dispersed; but "*all* flesh shall no more be destroyed" (vers.11, 16, 17).

And the *rainbow* shall serve as the

for eternal generations: 13. I have set My bow in the clouds, and it shall be for a sign of a covenant between Me and the earth. 14. And it shall come to pass, when I bring clouds over the earth, and the bow is seen in the clouds: 15. I shall remember My covenant, which *is* between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the water shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. 16. And if the bow is in the clouds, I shall look

sign of this perpetual covenant. Well might a reflecting mind look with wonder at the marvellous arch, which in magic swiftness, and in more magic colours, encompasses the still cloud-covered part of heaven; whilst the radiant sun sends his glorious beams from the other part, already restored to its usual serenity. Its beauty delights the eye, whilst its grandeur elevates the mind; it teaches the omnipotence of God, but still more His love; when the flashes of lightning have ceased, and the roaring of the tempest is silent, its chaste brilliancy falls like morning dew on the desponding heart; admiration and gratitude mingle in the breast; and when the pearly bow then appears, like an eternal bridge, to connect heaven and earth, the soul rises on the soft wings of veneration, disturbed by no doubt, and awed by no fear, to those regions where love and beauty never cease.—Almost all ancient nations, therefore, have connected religious ideas with the appearance of the rainbow. The Greeks considered it generally as the path on which Iris, the messenger of the king and queen of Olympus, travelled from heaven to earth; Homer describes it as fixed in the clouds to be *a sign* to man, either of war or of icy winter. But Iris herself was very frequently identified with the rainbow, and she was considered to be the daughter of Thaumas (*Wonder*) by *Electra* (*Brightness*), the daughter of *Oceanus*, which parentage describes appropriately the nature and origin of the rainbow. Her usual epithets are "swift-footed," and "gold-winged"; and the probable etymology of her name points either to the external, or, perhaps, to the internal connection between earth and heaven, between man and the deity; and thus she is the conciliating, the peace-restoring goddess, and is represented with the herald-staff in her left hand.—The Persians seem likewise to have connected the office of divine messenger with that phenomenon; for an old picture represents a winged boy on a rainbow, and before him kneels an old man in a posture of worship. The Hindoos describe the rainbow as a weapon in the hands of Indras, with which he hurls flashing darts upon the impious giants, and the Chinese consider it as foreboding troubles and misfortunes on earth; but the former regard it as also the symbol of peace, which appears to man when the combat of the heavens is silenced. These analogies are sufficient to prove the generality with which higher notions were attached to the rainbow; they account for its application in the Pentateuch to a very remarkable purpose; they explain why the New Testament represented the rainbow as an attribute of the Divine throne (Revel. iv. 3), or of angels sent as messengers upon the earth (Revel. x. 1); but they are likewise clear enough to manifest in this point also the great superiority of Biblical conceptions. In the Mosaic narrative every superstitious element is banished; it serves no other end but to remind God of His merciful promise never again to destroy the earth and its inhabitants; it is indeed appointed more for God than for the sake of man; *God* sees it, and remembers thus the everlasting covenant with the earth; and if

upon it, to remember the eternal covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that *is* upon the earth. 17. And God said to Noah, This *is* the sign of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that *is* upon the earth.—18. And the sons of Noah, who went out of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth: and Ham *is* the father of Canaan. 19. These *are* the three sons of Noah: and of them was the whole

the men are rejoiced at the sight of that beautiful phenomenon, it is merely because it gives them the certainty that the covenant is not forgotten; when torrents of rain begin to inundate the earth, and the thunder rolls through the heavy air, when lowering clouds conceal the light of the orb of day, and the heart of man begins to despond and to tremble, the rainbow appears suddenly like a thought from a better world; it announces the peace of nature, and the renewal of the eternal promise. And this implies another proof that the Noachian covenant imposed no obligations upon man, and that it was a pure act of mercy.—The words, "*I have given* my bow in the cloud," seem to imply that the rainbow existed before the time of Noah, but that it was then instituted to serve as a mark of Divine promise; the beautiful phenomenon was endowed with a new meaning; the wondrous enigma received a solution satisfactory to the Hebrew mind; and the sterile admiration for a marvel of nature was converted into a deep religious sentiment, combining the three heavenly sisters, faith and love and hope.

18—27. Scarcely had the remnants of the human race received the promises of peace and mercy, when the weakness of the human mind again broke out into sin and revolt; the conciliation between God and man was but of short duration; and the blessing was too soon succeeded by a severe curse. The piety of Noah was not inherited by the youngest of his three sons. Ham, the father of Canaan, was of a frivolous and impure disposition; his heart was indifferent to the first dictates of morality, and he defied the holy laws of filial reverence. His two elder brothers, Shem and Japheth, felt a profound horror against this unnatural impiety; and without inveighing against their degenerate brother, they performed, with a considerate regard, the duty which filial respect imposed. Divine justice demanded the punishment of the wicked son; and Noah, filled with the spirit of God, pronounced a lasting malediction against Ham. Degradation and servitude should be the lot of his descendants, whilst the progeny of his virtuous brothers should share the government over them.

These are the outlines of this strange episode full of historical interest. The principal question of importance is, in what sense, and when, have the prophecies of Noah been fulfilled? It strikes the mind at first sight, that although Ham committed the crime, the curse fell upon his son Canaan, and upon Canaan alone. Why do the descendants suffer for the transgressions of the sire? And if this principle is acted upon, why are not the other Hamites also — for instance, the Egyptians, Babylonians, and Assyrians— included in the imprecation? The only satisfactory answer to these questions, from the Biblical point of view, can be derived from the correct understanding of that important phrase in the second commandment, that God visits the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation, TO THOSE WHO HATE HIM (comp. notes on Exod. xx. 4—6). Hence it follows, that the Canaanites alone, of all the Hamites, were considered impious and wicked; that their

earth overspread.—20. And Noah began *to be* a husbandman, and he planted a vineyard: 21. And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent. 22. And Ham, the father *of* Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told *it* his two brothers without. 23. And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces

destruction was decreed as soon as "the measure of their iniquity was full"; and that they suffered both for their own sin, and that of the founder of their race. And the long-suffering of God did not hasten their perdition; He allowed them to grow and to prosper during the ten generations from Noah to Abraham, and the five following centuries, from Abraham to Joshua; their fields and vineyards yielded abundant harvests, and their land was full of strong and populous cities; but their evil deeds accumulated, and they forfeited the land which their vices had contaminated. The other descendants of Ham, though sunk in idolatrous worship, and blind to the knowledge of God, were believed less criminally guilty of violence and misdeeds against their fellow-men; their social and political life was deemed less perverse; and, indeed, they mostly outlived the existence of the Hebrew monarchy. Even so, not all the Shemites, but only the Hebrews, were included in the blessing of Noah.

But Canaan should not only fall into the hands of Shem, that is, the people of Israel, but also into those of Japheth (ver. 27). The earlier history of northern and western Asia has been preserved to us in too fragmentary a state to enable us to point to the exact allusion of our text. But it seems to us, that vigorous Armenian tribes came down from their mountainous tracts in search of more genial abodes, or were perhaps compelled to leave their land by foreign invasions; and as they were, in the south, opposed by the formidable arms of the Babylonians or Assyrians, they turned to the south-west, immigrated into Canaan, where they met with less powerful resistance from the weaker and less warlike tribes, made themselves masters of that part of the country which the Israelites had not occupied, and lived in peace and harmony with the Hebrew conquerors, with whom they were united by the common interest of keeping the dissatisfied Canaanites in obedience. At what period this happened it is impossible to decide: but there is no reason to doubt that the subjugation of Canaan by the Israelites here referred to, is that effected by Joshua and his immediate successors; it is, however, not less certain that the conquest of Canaan by the Israelites was never complete; that heathens remained scattered through the land, sufficient in number to offer frequent and powerful resistance to the Hebrews; and the history of the Judges, as well as that of the kings, is full of obstinate struggles with the remnants of the Canaanites; and nothing is more probable than that the northern and eastern parts of Palestine were occupied by East-Asiatic conquerors, or Japhethites, against whom the Hebrews felt no national animosity, whose courage inspired them with respect, and with whom they lived, theretore, in peace and concord. Thus, both the blessing and the curse which Noah pronounced find their easy explanation. Some see in our verses nothing less than the prediction of the Messianic time, when the descendants of Japheth would join the Israelites in the worship of the Eternal, and when both would equally consider Jerusalem as their spiritual centre: but in the connection of our nar-

were backward, and they did not see their father's nakedness. 24. And when Noah awoke from his wine, he learnt what his younger son had done to him. 25. And he said,

Cursed *be* Canaan;
A servant of servants shall he be to his brethren.

26. And he said,

Blessed *be* the Lord God of Shem;

rative, this beautiful idea, which forms one of the loftiest conceptions of the prophets, would be deprived of its essential grandeur; in the times of the Messiah, *no* people will be excluded from the knowledge of God; *all* the nations of the earth will flock to Zion, all will there bow down before the Lord; and all the families of the earth will acknowledge His dominion; it will be a glorious time, when God will exclaim: "Blessed is my people Egypt, and the work of my hands Assyria, and my inheritance Israel"; all thraldom will be removed; and a curse, like that here pronounced against Canaan, will weigh upon no nation. The words of Noah are, then, indeed introduced as prophetic; but, as far as they regard Japheth, they have no reference to religious, but to temporal blessings. This will be still more apparent, if we make one remark more upon this portion of our chapter. It proceeds evidently from the pen of the Jehovist; it is inserted by him to prepare the reader here already for the future glory of Israel; he approaches nearer to one of the chief ends of the Pentateuch; and he proves, that the origin of Israel's ascendancy, and of Canaan's degradation dates so far back as the family of the second founder of the human race. The antiquity of this event is calculated to add a powerful weight to the claims of the Hebrews, which it was deemed necessary to urge, even at this early stage of the earth's regeneration. Thus, this episode is in perfect harmony with the succeeding portions of the Pentateuch; but it is, also, in complete accordance with the preceding sections; though it presupposes the history of the flood (ver. 20), it in no way modifies it; there are no difficulties to be removed, nor contradictions to be reconciled. And if the *spirit* of this narrative is considered more severe; if here the most rigorous justice reigns instead of the indulgent mercy, which refreshingly breathes through the history of the Noachian covenant: we must remember, that the real destinies of the Canaanites were scarcely less rigid than the curses here pronounced against them; that prophecy embodies fore-shadowed history; and that the one necessarily bears the character of the other. This narrative is conceived in the same spirit which dictated the history of the expulsion of Ishmael, and the transfer of the birthright from Esau to Jacob; and it is a fore-runner of the more distinct and specified promises which God made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, concerning the possession of Canaan by their descendants, and of the grand blessings which Balaam was forced to proclaim upon Israel. It is true, that this portion is exclusively national; for even the descendants of Japheth are here not treated with the same free benevolence as the Israelites; only the God who blesses *Israel* is called *Jehovah*, whilst the protector of the Japhethites is *Elohim* (ver. 27); the idolators were not deemed worthy of the guardianship of the former; it is only the God of gods, not the Holy One who watches over them; just as the name of Jehovah was scrupulously avoided in the mouth of the serpent. But nobody can justly urge this narrower character of the episode as a reproach; the Israelites were clearly conscious of the infinite superiority of an ardent belief in one eternal God over the perverse veneration of a multitude of mute and powerless idols; we cannot brand this vivid conviction with the

And Canaan shall be his servant.
27. God will enlarge Japheth;
And he will dwell in the tents of Shem;
And Canaan shall be his servant.—
28. And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years. 29. And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years: and he died.

names of haughtiness or self-sufficiency; if the Bible commands man "*to know* his God," it teaches, at the same time, not only to despise, but to abhor the "nonentities" which the heathens call gods. Idolators may attain the same degree of external prosperity as the worshippers of the true God; their territories may be extended, and their commerce flourish; but the latter only will enjoy that happy peace of mind, and that communion with the eternal Spirit, which raises human felicity above the fluctuations of chance and fortune.—And let us here observe against the thousand modern misconceptions, that the God of Moses also is tolerant, and not exclusive; He is the God of mankind as well as of Israel; He is not "an idol which forbids other idols" (!); He is the Lord, not of a family, nor a nation, but of the world; *all* men are His children, *one* couple are the ancestors of all races and tribes; all are equally acceptable to Him, as long as they remain faithful to His service. But this principle could not be abandoned; tolerance, if carried further, is indifference; the permission, which the doctrine of the Hindoos gives, of serving any idol, is not love, but weakness; he who values truth, must disdain falsehood. It is, indeed, philosophically true, that whatever image or idol a man may worship, it is the great God who inspires him with that faith, and to whom thus indirectly the devotion is offered; but it is practically perverse to admit this as a religious principle; it destroys, in fact, every system of faith, and is powerless to exclude the grossest abuses. It is enough, if the gates of truth are opened for all nations; the sanctuary of the Old Testament is capacious enough for all the children of men; whoever is thirsty is invited to hasten to the fountain, and to refresh himself (Isai. lv. 1). But God does not condemn the erring souls; He pities their weakness; He does not, like the Persian Ormuzd, hate all strangers as creatures and instruments of the evil spirits; He does not regard them as impure abominations (or *kharfesters*); He does not consider the whole world as infested with *devs* or infernal demons in human form, who swarm over the earth, and fill every crevice like water, lie in wait to harm the believer, to ensnare his soul, and to tempt him to perdition. Even the heathens bear the image of the one good God; they have gone astray, but they are no seducers; even in their deepest depravity, there remains in them a trace of their heavenly origin; God certainly chose Israel as His inheritance, but the whole world belongs to Him (Exod. xix. 5); and all nations will one day join Israel in the worship of God. These are the doctrines of the Old Testament.

28, 29. The two last verses, stating the age which Noah attained, complete the genealogy of the fifth chapter, and form the conclusion of the first great epoch of Biblical history.

V.—THE GENEALOGY OF NATIONS.

Chapter X.

Summary.—The descendants of Noah spread on the surface of the earth, and became the ancestors of nations, or the founders of empires. For the reader's greater convenience, we give here a synoptic view of the results to which we have arrived concerning the geographical or ethnographic meanings of the names.

I. JAPHETH, representing the nations of the north and west.

i. Gomer—The *Bactrians*; Mountain nations.
  1. Ashkenaz—*Rhagae*, in Great Media.
  2. Riphath—*Rhipæan mountains.*
  3. Togarmah—*Taurica* (Crimea).

ii. Magog—The *Scythians.*

iii. Madai—The *Medes.*

iv. Javan—*Greece*; Maritime Countries.
  1. Elishah—*Hellas.*
  2. Tarshish—*Tartessus*, in Spain.
  3. Kittim—*Cyprus.*
  4. Dodanim—The *Daunians*, in Italy.

v. Tubal—The *Tibareni*, } in Northern Armenia.
vi. Meshech—The *Moschi*, }

vii. Tiras—The *Chain of the Taurus.*

II. HAM, including the nations of the south.

i. Cush—Tribes of *Southern Africa* and *Arabia.*
  1. Seba—*Meroe*, in Ethiopia.
  2. Havilah—*Near the Arabian Gulf.*
  3. Sabtah—The *Astabori*, near the river Tacazze.
  4. Raamah—Regma, in *Arabia.*
    a) Sheba—Saba, in *Arabia Felix.*
    b) Dedan—On the *north-west coast of the Arabian Gulf*, and near the *Persian Gulf.*
  5. Sabtechah—In *Ethiopia*; perhaps Nigritia.
  6. Babel—*Babylon.*
  7. Erech—*Orchoe*, on the Euphrates.
  8. Accad—*Tel Nimroud*, or Akker-Kuf, near Baghdad.
  9. Calneh—A town in *Chalonitis* (perhaps Ctesiphon), on the Tigris.
  10. Nineveh—*Nineveh*, on the Tigris.
  11. Rehoboth Ir—Probably on the *eastern banks of the Euphrates.*
  12. Calah—*Kalah Sherghat*, fifty-five miles south of Mosul.
  13. Resen—*Nimroud*, seventeen miles south of Mosul.

ii. Mizraim—*Egypt.*
  1. Ludim—*Letus*, or *Letopolis*, in Lower Egypt.
  2. Anamim—Perhaps *Cynopolis*, the town of *Anubis*, in Middle Egypt.
  3. Lehabim—The *Libyans.*
  4. Naphtuhim—*Napata*, in the north of Meroe.
  5. Pathrusim—*Upper Egypt*, or *Thebais.*
  6. Casluhim—*Chemnis*, or *Panopolis.*
    a) Philistim—*Philistines.*
  7. Caphtorim—*Coptos*, in the Upper Thebaid.

iii. Phut—*Phaiat*, or *Libya, near Egypt*; or, perhaps, Buto, in the Delta.

iv. Canaan—*Syria, Phœnicia*, and *Palestine.*
  1. Sidon—*Sidon*, in Phœnicia.
  2. Heth—The *Hittites*, near Hebron, Bethel, etc.
  3. The Jebusite—In and around *Jerusalem.*
  4. The Amorite—On *both sides of the Jordan.*
  5. The Girgasite—In the *centre of Palestine.*
  6. The Hivite—In *Shechem* and *Gibeon*, and *near the Hermon.*
  7. The Arkite—*Arca*, in Phœnicia, at the north-west foot of the Lebanon.
  8. The Sinite—*Sinnas*, near Arca.
  9. The Arvadite—The island *Aradus*, at the northern coast of Phœnicia.

10. The Zemarite—*Simyra*, twenty-four miles south-east of Antaradus.
11. The Hamathite—*Epiphania*, in Syria.

III. SHEM, representing the central parts of the ancient world.

i. Elam—*Elymais*, in Persia.
ii. Asshur—*Assyria*.
iii. Arphaxad—*Arrhaphachitis*, in North Assyria.
1. Salah—Along the *eastern banks of the Tigris*.
2. Eber—In the *west of the Tigris and Euphrates*.
a) Peleg—In various parts of *Arabia Deserta*.
b) Joktan—*Kachtan*, in the north of Nedsheran.
1. Almodad—In *Arabia Deserta*.
2. Sheleph—The *Salapeni*, in Arabia Felix.
3. Hazarmaveth—*Hadramaut*, in the South of Arabia.
4. Jerah—The *coast* and *mountain of the Moon*, near Hadramaut.
5. Hadoram—Likewise *adjoining Hadramaut*, on the coast.
6. Uzal—*Sanaa*, the capital of Yemen.
7. Diklah
8. Obal } Uncertain.
9. Abimael
10. Sheba—The *Sabaeans*, in the eastern parts of Arabia.
11. Ophir—On the *southern* or *south-eastern coast of Arabia*.
12. Havilah—Near the *Persian Gulf*.
13. Jobab—In *Arabia Deserta*.
iv. Lud—The *Lydians*, originally living in the highlands of Armenia.
v. Aram.—*Aramæa*, including Northern Mesopotamia, Syria, and districts of Arabia.
1. Uz—*Ausitis*, in the northern parts of Arabia Deserta.
2. Hul—Perhaps *Golan*, in the east of the Jordan.
3. Gether—Perhaps *Geshur*, on the Orontes.
4. Mash—The *Mysians*.

We now insert at once the translation of the whole chapter, in order to be enabled to give the general exposition of this important section in a more convenient form.

CHAPTER X.

1. Now these are the generations of the sons of Noah; Shem, Ham, and Japheth: and to them were sons born after the flood.

2. The sons of Japheth: Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras.—3. And the sons of Gomer: Ashkenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah.—4. And the sons of Javan: Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim.—5. By these the isles of the nations were spread in their lands; every one after its tongue, after their families, in their nations.

6. And the sons of Ham: Cush, and Mizraim, and Phut, and Canaan.—7. And the sons of Cush: Seba, and Havilah, and Sabtah, and Raamah, and Sabtechah. And the sons of Raamah: Sheba, and Dedan. 8. And Cush begat Nimrod; he began to be a mighty man on the earth. 9. He was *also* a mighty hunter before the Lord: there-

fore it is said, Like Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord. 10. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. 11. Out of that land he went forth to Asshur, and built Nineveh, and Rehoboth Ir, and Calah, 12. And Resen between Nineveh and Calah; that *is* the great city.—13. And Mizraim begat Ludim, and Anamim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim, 14. And Pathrusim, and Casluhim (out of whom came Philistim), and Caphtorim.—15. And Canaan begat Sidon his firstborn, and Heth, 16. And the Jebusite, and the Amorite, and the Girgasite, 17. And the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite, 18. And the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite: and afterwards were the families of the Canaanites spread abroad. 19. And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon towards Gerar to Gaza; towards Sodom, and Gomorrah, and Admah, and Zeboim, to Lasha. 20. These *are* the sons of Ham, after their families, after their tongues, in their countries, *and* in their nations.

21. To Shem also, the father of all the children of Eber, the elder brother of Japheth, were *children* born. 22. The children of Shem *are:* Elam, and Asshur, and Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram.—23. And the children of Aram: Uz, and Hul, and Gether, and Mash.—24. And Arphaxad begat Salah; and Salah begat Eber. 25. And to Eber two sons were born: the name of the one *was* Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided; and his brother's name *was* Joktan. 26. And Joktan begat Almodad, and Sheleph, and Hazarmaveth, and Jerah, 27. And Hadoram, and Uzal, and Diklah, 28. And Obal, and Abimael, and Sheba, 29. And Ophir, and Havilah, and Jobab: all these *were* the sons of Joktan. 30. And their abode was from Mesha towards Sephar, *to* the mount of the east.—31. These *are* the sons of Shem, after their families, after their tongues, in their lands, after their nations.

32. These *are* the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations: and by these were the nations spread on the earth after the flood.

THE GENEALOGY OF NATIONS.

One couple had been the origin of the human families; one family was preserved to people the earth anew, when the former inhabitants were destroyed; and all the various nations which live scattered in the different parts of the globe, are the descendants of that one family. It was impossible to point with greater force to the beautiful doctrine of the unity of mankind; but such stress was necessary for the injunction of the all-important principle of universal love; the more so, as this principle stands in direct antagonism with the notions then prevailing among heathens; it destroys at once the fables regarding numberless autochthonic tribes, the direct offspring of their native soil, and regarding each other with pride, contempt, or enmity. According to the Bible, the inhabitants of the different zones form one large family; they are the children of the same patriarch: "These are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and sons were born to them after the flood." They proceeded all from the same centre, whence they spread over the surface of the earth; and for a long time they were, moreover, united by the powerful bond of one universal language (xi. 1). Even the curse of Canaan seems here forgotten; no word reminds the reader, that he was a rejected member in the family of nations; on the contrary, no other tribe is described with such complete detail as that of Canaan (vers. 15—19): nothing disturbs the harmony of this grand genealogy. The division into the descendants of the three sons of Noah cannot, therefore, allude to three chief *races* of mankind, traceable to a different origin; nor even to the obvious variety of colour (black, red, and white or yellow), since the Ethiopians and Assyrians, for instance, are represented as descending from the same branch: it expresses the fact, that although there always remain indications of the common origin of the human family, the various members formed, at their propagation, three great groups of nations, more closely connected with each other by more contiguous abodes, and greater similarity of language; but that this separation is not so complete or decided, that an ultimate re-union of all nations should be impossible. In this one idea alone, the genealogy of our chapter bears the proof of its genuine and independent Hebrew character; it is not borrowed from other historical documents, because the history of no other nation has so distinctly united the beginning and end of human destinies; and because the entire arrangement is so thoroughly systematic, that it is evidently adapted to the context in which it is introduced. It is true, the Hindoos also connected all the nations of which they had the least knowledge, with their own history; but they traced the other nations to illegitimate alliances between different castes, and regarded them all as impure rebels and abominations. Indeed, this list is without a parallel in the whole range of ancient literature. It may be interesting to examine, from what sources the Hebrews derived such extensive geographical knowledge as that embodied in this remarkable list. But this question forms part of a far more comprehensive enquiry on the sources of the Pentateuch, which we must postpone to a future occasion. It is, perhaps, one of the surest signs and of the greatest prerogatives of genius, to be able to combine large philosophical views with completeness and accuracy of detail, and to furnish the proof, that the free creations of the intellect are neither fettered nor impeded by the persevering efforts of industry. The author of the Pentateuch proposed to himself the solution of more than one great philosophical and moral problem; but he felt, that abstract truths, expressed in an abstruse form, would fail to sink deeply into the minds of those whom it was his desire to enlighten; and the more he was penetrated with the importance of an idea, the greater must naturally have been his anxiety to surround it with a distinct and concrete form, by developing it into the fullest possible detail. Now, the Pentateuch is so designed, that, although tending to describe the history and the laws of the Hebrews, it does not exclude the origin of the other nations, nor does it forget to assign to them their relative position in the history of the world; for this reason partly, it

commences with a cosmogony, and hence it enumerates the whole circle of the nations known or important at that time. However, the *form* of this composition is again kindred with that employed by other ancient nations for similar ends. The earliest historiography consists almost entirely of genealogies; they are most frequently the medium of explaining the connection and descent of tribes and nations; an ancestor is made the founder of a town, or an empire, and his sons represent the later colonies or depending countries of that power; the first part of Greek history is based upon these principles, and the Hindoo traditions derive from them a great part of their precision. The Dorians and Æolians, the Ionians and Achæans, are traced back to a Dorus and Æolus, an Ion and Achæus; the town of Memphis to a daughter of the Nile bearing that name, the wife of Epaphus; and Libya to her daughter. It may be questioned, whether a son of Canaan was called Sidon (ver. 15); but it is certain, that our author considered the Sidonians as a younger branch of the Canaanites. It is necessary to bear in mind this circumstance; for we see simple proper nouns mixed with collective nouns; the sons of Javan, for instance, were "Elishah and Tarshish, the Kittim and Dodanim" (ver. 4); and we find that names, invariably applied as countries, are here introduced as names of persons; as, Havilah and Ophir (ver. 29).

This list forms an organic part of the composition of Genesis; it is a direct continuation of the preceding section; it alludes repeatedly to the deluge which had just taken place;[1] and, thus, impresses effectually, that all the present inhabitants of the earth are born under the covenant of grace which God had concluded with Noah for all generations.

I.—THE JAPHETHITES. Vers. 2—5.

Although Japheth is the youngest son of Noah, his descendants are introduced first, in order to pass from the genealogy of the eldest son, Shem, at once to the patriarchs who lead to Abraham, the first great founder of monotheism. The three sons are, in all other passages, enumerated in the order of Shem, Ham, and Japheth; and Shem is distinctly called the elder brother of Japheth.[2] The authentic abodes of the Japhethites are, according to the names mentioned in our verses, in the northern and western parts of the ancient world, comprising the countries from the Mediterranean Sea and the European coasts to northern Asia beyond the Taurus.

1. Gomer. Its general position is perfectly certain; for Ezekiel[3] remarks that the allies of the mighty northern king Gog included Gomer and Togarmah, "at the sides of the north," and our chapter[4] mentions Togarmah among the sons of Gomer. We may conclude, from these circumstances, that his descendants dwelt in the most distant northern regions known to the ancient Hebrews; and we may infer from the first place which Gomer occupies in this list, that they were considered as one of the most ancient nations of the north. These conditions are realised if we identify them with the *Chomari*, a nation in Bactriana, near the Oxus, mentioned by Ptolemy. Bactria is one of the oldest countries which progressed towards a regular political organization; Bactra, its chief town, was generally regarded as one of the oldest cities in the world, and the town Balkh, which is supposed to occupy its site, is still called by the Orientals, "the mother of cities"; it was at an early period known even to distant countries; and Bacchus is said to have visited it; Bactria was, both by the prowess of its inhabitants, and its numerous mountain fastnesses, long protected against subjugation; and repeated attacks of the mighty kings of Babylon and Assyria were fruitless. Even under the Persian kings, Bactria formed an important satrapy, and always distinguished itself by its excellent cavalry. If we consider that not even the earlier Assyrian monarchs proceeded farther to the north than Bactria, we shall find it but natural that in this first ethnographic attempt of the Hebrews,

[1] vers. 1, 5, 25, 32. [2] ver. 21; comp. ix. 26, 27. [3] xxxviii. 6. [4] ver. 3.

it is enumerated among the most northern countries, especially as its dominions extended beyond the range of the Paropamisus or Hindoo Coosh.

1. *Ashkenaz.* As this tribe is[5] coupled with Ararat and Minni, who were to join an alliance for the destruction of Babylon, we must seek Ashkenaz in the neighbourhood of the Caspian sea; and as Josephus identifies its inhabitants with the *Rhegines*, we have no hesitation in declaring Ashkenaz identical with the great and ancient town Rhagae, one day's journey to the south of the Caspian sea, in the eastern part of Great Media. This situation of Ashkenaz seems, indeed, to have been preserved as a tradition, since the Arabian translator explains, in the passage of Jeremiah, "those who live near the Caspian sea," and Jonathan renders *Adiabene*, the Assyrian province. The name itself seems to be of Assyrian origin. The whole territory round Raghae is extremely high and cold; and the elevations extend almost without interruption to Matiane and Armenia, although the valleys are here remarkably fertile and blooming. The aspect of this part of Asia is, therefore, very analogous to that of Parthia, which we have identified with Gomer; and we are, therefore, of opinion that the descendants of Gomer were regarded strictly as *the inhabitants of the mountain lands*; and were, as such, considered peculiarly warlike, brave, and hardy; they are, in fact, scarcely mentioned in any other but military connection. Rhagae was several times destroyed, but successively rebuilt by Greek and later kings; and at present its ruins are still extant at Rhey, not far from Teheran, and have attracted the attention of many modern travellers.

2. *Riphath.* The Rhipaean mountains were considered by the ancient geographers as forming the extreme northern border of the earth, covered with eternal snow, containing the caverns from which the icy northern blasts issue, and belonging to the land of the Hyperboreans. But they extend southward to the Caspian sea, run towards the chain of the Caucasus, and are most probably that western branch of the Ural mountains in which the Don (Tanais) rises. The knowledge of the ancients with regard to the extreme boundaries of the earth was very limited; in the want of accurate and scientific researches, they exerted their imagination; and fictions were circulated instead of facts; the columns of Hercules and the gardens of the Hesperides in the far west, the Hyperboreans in the north, and the Anthropophagi in the south, are some features of their fabulous geography. Though Bactria was historically and distinctly known to the Hebrews as the most northern country, they were but dimly acquainted with the Ural mountains by vague traditions and inaccurate accounts of some enterprising travellers who had ventured into those uninviting tracts. If, therefore, Gomer is Bactria, it is more than probable that Riphath designates those regions of the Rhipaean mountains, the inhabitants of which were regarded as colonists of the powerful Bactrian empire. Thus we have again mountain tribes as the descendants of Gomer.

3. *Togarmah.* To the north and west of the Caspian Sea lived the wild and warlike Sarmatian tribes; they extended their incursions frequently as far as the coast of the Black Sea and the Sea of Asov, but were, on the frontiers of the Tauric Peninsula (the Crimea), bravely opposed by a nation which had from very early times held possession of that region, and who are known under the name of the *Tauri*, a Scythian tribe. With this Tauric Peninsula we identify the Togarmah of our text. Except in the corresponding list of the Book of Chronicles, it occurs only in two other passages throughout the Old Testament, but both are so characteristic that they permit distinct inferences and conclusions. It is, on the one hand, mentioned as a well-armed and military nation of the distant north, ready and prepared to join Gomer and other valiant nations in the expeditions of Gog;[6] and it appears, on the other hand, as a peaceful agricultural tribe, breeding noble horses and mules, and

[5] In Jerem. li. 27.

[6] Ezek. xxxviii. 6.

sending them to the Tyrian market, then the great centre of commerce.[1] Now we have the testimony of Strabo, that the inhabitants of the Tauric peninsula were divided into two very different classes; the more northern part was nomadic; disposed to war, though not to robbery; averse to the cultivation of the soil, and therefore letting out its territory for a settled, but moderate tribute. The southern population, on the contrary, was almost exclusively engaged in husbandry; they were considered more civilized and mild, but addicted to gain; they navigated the sea, but did not abstain from piracy, nor from other acts of injustice and rapacity. It is obvious from these notices that the nomadic Taurians, though wild and rude, were regarded as honest and just, whilst the agriculturists and merchants were morally not viewed in so favourable a light. The same difference is transparent in the two passages of Ezekiel; not without a certain pointed slight are the nations coupled with Togarmah called "traders in human souls and brazen wares";[2] and the nations which by their commerce contributed to the greatness of Tyre, are prophetically included in the ruin which awaited the proud city.[3] The Tauric peninsula further abounded in horses, which, though small, were very spirited, and not easily broken; the northern nomadic tribes even lived chiefly upon the flesh of horses and cheese of mares' milk; and wild asses were plentiful in the plains. And if we hereto add, that the land, though in the south full of fertile valleys, yielding thirty-fold even without great agricultural skill, and allowing the exportation of enormous supplies of corn to various parts of Asia and of Greece, was yet regarded as rugged and mountainous, and indeed is so in a peculiar degree in the northern part; that the Taurians were early known to the Asiatic nations, either by their military invasions or their commerce; and that the descendants of Japheth comprise both the north and the west, and therefore unite Asia and Europe: we can neither be surprised that the Taurians should be considered as akin with the Bactrians, nor doubt that Togarmah is identical with the peninsula which they chiefly inhabited. Already in the time of the Trojan war, a temple dedicated to a goddess corresponding to the Greek Diana was celebrated in this peninsula; and it was to these shores that Iphigenia was carried when on the point of being sacrificed to the goddess.

II. Magog. The prophet Ezekiel speaks of the people of Magog with an emphasis and copiousness which prove at once its importance, and the vastness of its dominions. Its tributaries are, Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal; and its allies, the Persians, Ethiopians and Libyans, Gomer and Togarmah, nations brave and mighty; but Magog surpasses them all.[4] The prophet predicted, that Gog, the king of Magog, would, from his northern habitation, march down to the land of Israel; his enormous troops would inundate the plains, and occupy the mountains; like a tempest and a cloud, they would come over the land. Their avaricious desire would be directed against the treasures of the rich; booty would be their aim, and with barbarous violence would they satisfy their thirst of gold and silver.[5] But God would declare a fearful judgment against them; the earth would tremble, the mountains be destroyed, and the walls overthrown; the sword of the friend would rage against the friend; pestilence, torrents of rain, hail, and fire would spread dismay and havoc among the people of Gog, and all the nations which serve his pride.[6] Then the birds and beasts of prey would come and feast upon their carcases, eating their flesh, and drinking their blood; devouring the horses, the heroes, and the princes till they were surfeited.[7] And the Israelites would come out, and burn the weapons of the impious heathens, their shields and bucklers, their bows and arrows; for seven years they would be occupied in destroying them, and would, during all this time, require no wood of the field or of the forest for

[1] Ezek. xxvii. 14.
[2] *Ib.* xxvii. 13.
[3] ver. 27.
[4] *Ib.* xxxviii. 1—6.
[5] Ezek. xxxviii. 7—13.
[6] *Ib.* 14—23.
[7] *Ib.* xxxix. 1—8, 17—20.

their domestic use.[1] Then they would bury the stupendous piles of corpses; seven months would hardly suffice; and whole valleys on the east side of the Lake of Genezareth would be filled with the graves of Magog.[2] Then the land would be purified, and Israel be restored to its pristine peace and glory.—It is obvious, that this is an ideal prophecy; it refers to events which have, in their literal sense, not been fulfilled; indeed, the text itself places their occurrence in the "latter days";[3] it describes them as having, in a similar manner, been predicted by preceding prophets;[4] and, in the Revelation of St. John, their realization is fixed at that distant future when Satan, after having been bound for a thousand years, is again let loose from his infernal pit.[5] But yet, ideal prophecies occurring in the Bible have invariably a historical basis; there are real events which occasioned, and serve to illustrate, the distant occurrences. It is, therefore, beforehand an obvious conjecture, that Magog are the *Scythians*, of whose aggressive invasions ancient writers relate chiefly the following facts. Whilst Cyaxares, the king of Media, grand-son of Dejoces, was besieging Nineveh,[6] the Scythians, pursuing the Cimmerians, had entered Asia, and devastated the territories of the Medes; Cyaxares hastened to oppose them, but was completely defeated, and the Scythians became masters of Asia. They proceeded through Palestine towards Egypt, but the king Psammetichus[7] prevailed upon them, by rich presents, to advance no further. They returned to Ascalon, where they pillaged the most ancient temple of the Celestial Venus. They governed over Asia during twenty-eight years; "everything was overthrown by their licentiousness and neglect"; they exacted an enormous tribute, and plundered the wealth of their victims. Inebriated by these successes, they abandoned themselves to luxury and revelry, and were thus defeated by Cyaxares in a fearful carnage, and expelled from Asia.[8] These facts are, we believe, a sufficient basis for the grand prophecies of Ezekiel; the descriptions of Magog, their armies, their allies, their avarice, and their ultimate destruction, are clearly the magnifying mirror of these Scythian events. It is, indeed, remarkable, that these wild hordes did not inflict upon Palestine the devastations universally anticipated with horror; if they were induced by presents to keep away from Egypt, what withheld them from satisfying their rapacity in the feeble and exhausted land of Israel? This was deemed an obvious act of Divine mercy; and the almost miraculous exemption from the destructive sword forms the foundation of the prophet's enthusiastic hopes. It is the sagacious conjecture of a modern critic, that the Scythians were, by the eclipse of the moon which terrified Asia in the year 621,[9] induced to leave Palestine from superstitious fear; and that several exhortations of the prophet Jeremiah, not to be afraid of the signs of heaven,[10] refer to this phenomenon. However this may be, the deliverance of the Israelites was naturally ascribed to the direct interference of God; although the Biblical historians entirely pass over the invasion of the Scythians, prophets and poets availed themselves of the terror which their formidable presence inspired, to kindle the religious fire of their indolent compatriots into a purer flame; they described their invasion as a threatening scourge which might be averted by a complete return to the God of Israel. A higher religious sentiment seems, indeed, to have, in these times of consternation, pervaded the people; and the reforms of the pious king Josiah were its noble first-fruits.[11] Nor did the Scythian hosts quit Palestine without leaving a trace of their superiority. The large and ancient town Bethshean, situated in the west of the Jordan, at the south-eastern extremity of the plain Esdraelon, received the name of Scythopolis; because, as Pliny remarks, "a Scythian colony was established here"; and was to later times

[1] Ezek. xxxix. 9, 10.
[2] *Ib.* 11—16.
[3] *Ib.* xxxviii. 16, 8.
[4] *Ib.* 17.
[5] Revel. xx. 8.
[6] In B.C. 624, during the reign of Josiah, king of Judah.
[7] B.C. 656—611.
[8] About B.C. 600.
[9] On the 22nd of April.
[10] Jer. x. 2.
[11] Jerem. iii.—vi.; Ps. xxxiii.

inhabited by a mixed population of Hebrews and heathens. All circumstances conspire, therefore, to render the identification of Magog with the Scythians probable. And this probability is almost raised to a certainty by the traditions of the ancient writers. But Magog seems to have been used in the same extensive sense as the Greek Scythia, and to have, like the latter, embraced most of the various nomadic nations which inhabited the regions beyond Media and the Caucasian Mountains, indefinitely to the north and east; and which, because individually little known, were comprised in one general term; it is, therefore, very hazardous to specify one people as the Magog of our text.—The king of Magog is generally called Gog, which seems to have been an appellative name, like Pharaoh, Cæsar, and similar titles. But, in later periods, Gog was coupled *as a nation* with Magog; and so it occurs in the New Testament.

III. MADAI. These are unquestionably the *Medi*, or inhabitants of *Media*, which signifies, perhaps, the empire of the middle, because it was believed to be situated in the centre of Asia. The extent of Media is very uncertain; ancient writers comprise under this name frequently all the countries in the east of the Tigris along the Caspian Sea to Ariana and Bactriana. But sometimes the boundaries of Media are more restricted, and Media Magna alone is considered as the territory of the Medi. They were during a long period subject to the Assyrian empire; in fact, their first mention in the Bible shows them as forming a satrapy of Shalmaneser; but they felt the ignominy of the hateful yoke, for they are described as having originally been a high-spirited people, skilled in the use of the bow, delighting in warfare, and famous for their horsemanship; they broke out in an open revolt, and proclaimed their independence. According to Herodotus, their first chosen king was Dejoces, who was followed by Phraortes and Cyaxares; the latter, after having repelled the invasion of the Scythians, destroyed Nineveh; but under his successor, Astyages, the supremacy was transferred to the Persians under Cyrus the Great; the Medes were incorporated in the Persian empire; and the name Madai was, therefore, from this time, frequently used instead of Persia; or both names are mentioned together, sometimes Persia and sometimes Media occupying the first place.

IV. IAVAN denotes properly *Ionia*, the celebrated Greek colony in Asia Minor, and is, in this limited sense, used in several passages of the Old Testament. The Ionians engaged in extensive commercial undertakings, and frequented the markets of Tyre; but in later times Hebrew captives were by Assyrian kings sold into Ionia, where they seem, however, to have been so degradingly treated, that the prophet Zechariah announced the approaching day of revenge. But the name of Ionians was very generally given to all the Greeks, not by the Hebrews only, but also by most of the other Asiatics, who naturally identified the Asiatic colony with the more distant mother country. But in our passage, Javan is used in a still more extensive sense, embracing all the western islands of the Mediterranean sea; this acceptation is evident from the abodes of the younger branches enumerated in the fourth verse. For the descendants of Javan are:—

1. *Elishah.* It is certain, almost beyond a doubt, that this is the Hebrew name for *Hellas.* If Javan is the generic name for all Greeks, it is natural that the European Hellens should be mentioned in the first place among Javan's progeny, although the Greek legends make Ion the descendant of Hellen. In Ezekiel, Elishah is introduced as an island from which purple stuffs were imported into Phœnicia; and we possess the testimony of ancient writers, that on the coasts of Peloponnesus, and of many Greek islands, the shell-fish, the juice of which yielded the much valued purple colours, were most abundantly found. This is another reason for explaining Elishah for Greece and her islands generally, instead of limiting it to the province of Elis, as several critics have done. Phœnician inscriptions which have been found in Athens prove an early commercial intercourse between the Greeks and the Syrian coasts.

2. *Tarshish* was a rich country, governed by its own kings, and able to send valuable presents; abounding especially in silver, iron, tin, and lead; a precious stone, probably the chrysolite, chiefly found in those districts, bears the name of Tarshish; it was situated near other renowned islands, and was itself washed by the waves of the sea; it was therefore accessible by navigation, which was extensively carried on by the Phœnicians and other nations in large famous ships, which were the models for the vessels of commerce in general, and were therefore known under the name of "vessels of Tarshish;" the port from which they started was Joppa, on the coast of Palestine. It requires only some comparison with the accounts which Greek writers furnish about the Spanish Tartessus, to perceive its identity with Tarshish. It is universally known that the Phœnicians entertained a lively commerce with Spain, whence they imported a large amount of gold, silver, lead, and iron; but no part of the peninsula was more famous for its opulence than Tartessus, the wealth of which passed into a proverb. The exact site of Tartessus was, however, unknown even in the time of Strabo, who states the then general belief that it was situated on that piece of land between the two outlets of the river Guadalquiver (Bætis), which bore also the name of the "silver-bedded Tartessus." In fact, the whole district of Andalusia, which the Turdetani then inhabited, was called Tartessus, and it is most probable that the Tarshish of our text is intended to denote the whole of Spain so far as it was known to the Hebrews, just as Javan is used to designate all the Greeks.

3. *Kittim.* One of the most ancient towns on the island of Cyprus was Citium; it was situated on the south-eastern coast of the island, possessed a harbour which could be closed, and ruins of its walls and houses, and of an extensive theatre, are still extant in the neighbourhood of Larnika; and on examination of these remains, copious Phœnician inscriptions have been discovered on the foundation stones. Thus, it is at once evident that Citium, like Amathus, and other Cyprian towns, was a Phœnician colony; as indeed Herodotus mentions among the very mixed population of Cyprus, the Phœnicians also; and it is intelligible why it is here introduced immediately after Tartessus, with which it bears more than one analogy. It furnished to the Tyrians, on the one hand, very valuable articles of import, especially timber for the construction of ships; the Cyprian copper had attained a general reputation; the mines yielded gold and silver, and among the precious stones for which that rich island was celebrated, were the smaragd and emerald, the red jasper and agate, and perhaps the diamond; and it abounded also in oil, wine and honey. But Cyprus was, on the other hand, a convenient station for the Phœnicians in their more distant western expeditions; just as Spain was the station for their excursions to the Britannic islands, from whence they shipped tin (stannum). The inhabitants of Citium are called by the Romans Citiæi, by the Greek writers Kittæi, and are evidently identical with our Kittim. But it is certain that in later periods the term Kittim was extended to many islands and shores of the Mediterranean, as Rhodes, Greece, and Sicily, to Italy, and even to Macedonia; it is, therefore, most probable that it is to be taken here generally for the island of Cyprus, which, both by its products and by its natural position, was of paramount importance to the Phœnicians, but, as a western island, is here also comprised among the possessions of the Javanites. In later periods, the intercourse between Cyprus and Greece was most active; the Greeks occupied a great portion of the soil and adopted many of its religious rites, whilst the dependence of the island upon Phœnicia seems to date from a very early time; in fact both the character of the inhabitants, and the nature of their Divine worship, as the orgiastic adoration of Astarte, bore entirely the eastern, and more especially the Phœnician stamp.

4. The *Dodanim* are the last descendants of Javan here mentioned. If this genealogical list, which has been acknowledged as one of the most important do-

cuments of ancient geography, has the least claim to completeness or order, it will be at once granted, that Italy cannot be omitted among the countries assigned to the Javanites. If Greece and Spain are distinctly mentioned in Elishah and Tarshish, if the islands of the Mediterranean Sea are represented by Kittim, the Dodanim are, in our opinion, no others than the Daunii, who formed the most ancient population of Apulia, and who were, therefore, by ancient geographers used to designate, like the Iapygians, the whole south-eastern portion of Italy, including Calabria. The Daunians were, like many other inhabitants of southern Italy, a Pelasgian race; they preserved long among themselves Greek customs and arts; their coins bear pure Greek inscriptions, and their bronzes and painted vases betray Greek imitation; this historical fact was embodied in the early legend of the settlement of Diomedes in these regions; and it is certain, that they occupied chiefly the great plains on the coast of Apulia; here they founded a great number of cities, built harbours, and, probably, carried on both piracy and sea-commerce; they cultivated the soil, on which, in spite of the extreme aridity of its pastures in summer, they grew wheat and olives with eminent success; they, further, reared horses and sheep; and the wool of the latter was celebrated for its peculiar fineness, and formed an important article of commerce. If we assume, therefore, here also one portion of the peninsula to denote its whole extent, and take Daunia for Italy, we have an appropriate explanation of the territory of Dodanim, which must be regarded as peopled by Greek settlements, and must be situated on the shores of the Western Sea.

v. and vi. Tubal and Meshech are frequently mentioned together in the Old Testament, either as warlike nations, destined to be the terror of the world, or as the tributaries of the mighty king of the Scythians, Magog, whose chief pride and support they formed. They must, therefore, like the latter, be northern tribes, whose renown was magnified by the distance of their abodes. Tubal is, indeed, introduced as a remote nation to which the fame of Israel's glory has never reached. Now, as Meshech has been identified with the Moschi, a Colchian tribe, extending along the south-eastern shores of the Black Sea, between the sources of the Phasis and those of the Cyrus, and bordered on the south by the lofty and wood-covered chain of the Armenian mountains, now called Tchildir; and as the Moschi were, at least during the Persian epoch, in a military and political respect, united with the Tibareni, a tribe likewise in the south-east of the Euxine Sea, and between the Chalybes and Trebizond: it was natural to find in the *Tibareni* the descendants of Tubal. Tubal and Meshech are, further, mentioned by the prophet Ezekiel, as providing the Tyrian market with copper and with slaves. Now, copper is most abundant in the mountains of northern Armenia; and the fine tribes of the Pontus and Cappadocia, as at present those of Georgia and Mingrelia, furnished the Asiatic markets and the harems with the most beautiful slaves. Nor have those races changed the wildness and rapacity of their character; and, as the Psalmist deeply commiserated the destiny of those who have the misfortune to dwell as strangers or captives among these barbarous hordes, just so might modern travellers dread the contact of people "whose greatest ambition it is to be deemed the most cunning and most distinguished robbers."

vii. The last branch of the Japhethites is Tiras, a name which occurs in no other passage. The context requires a land not distant from Armenia; and nothing is more natural than to identify Tiras with the great Asiatic mountain-chain of *Taurus*. The Moschian mountains extend south-west till they join to the chain of the Anti-Taurus. Separated from the latter only by the plains of Cappadocia and Lycaonia, rises the Taurus, in ancient geography considered so important that it formed the chief division of Asia into the countries north and south of it. It extends from the extremities of Pamphylia as far eastward as the Bay of Bengal, where the Indians and the neighbouring Scythians lived; but it lost the name Taurus in the region where it reaches

the Armenian mountains, which continue their eastward course under different appellations. Now, it is our opinion, that Tiras comprises all those Asiatic tribes the territory of which is traversed by the Taurus Proper; and that it includes, therefore, Cilicia and Pamphylia, Pisidia and Lycia, and, with an extension usual in almost all the names of the Japhethites, embracing, likewise, most of the nations of Asia Minor, and of the interior. It is clear, that thus only the diffusion of the Japhethites is completed; they extended, therefore, from Bactria and the Imaus, almost in a straight line westward, to the Taurus and Asia Minor; and from there, again almost westward, to the shores and islands of the Mediterranean Sea, including Greece, Italy, and Spain; whilst they occupied, in the north, the vast but indefinite tracts of Scythia, from the Black and Caspian Seas up to the fabulous regions of the Rhipæan mountains, and of the Hyperboreans.

The enumeration of the Japhethites is summed up with the remark, that the names mentioned include only the principal nations, but that there exist other tribes descending from Japheth, which it was, however, not deemed necessary to introduce (ver. 5). There are, especially, many "islands" and maritime countries, which became later of great renown and importance, and the origin of which must be traced to the lands here specified. By the extensive meaning which we have assigned to Javan and the Javanites, we have prepared the reader for this notion.

II.—THE HAMITES. Vers. 6—20.

Ham is the ancestor of all the southern nations of the globe. His descendants are:—

1. Cush. We have above (p. 69) alluded to a very curious geographical notion, extensively entertained by the ancients, concerning the existence of a vast continent uniting the eastern parts of Africa, Arabia, and India; we have observed, that hence their strange belief of the connection between the Indus and the Nile may have arisen; and that, therefore, India and Egypt even were not unfrequently confounded. Nothing is, therefore, more probable than that the Cushites, whose chief habitations were in the wide tracts of *Ethiopia*, in the south of Egypt, beyond Syene, were, likewise, believed to have spread in the Arabian peninsula, and here to have become the founders of mighty and populous tribes (ver. 8). A careful comparison of the various Biblical passages and allusions raises this double settlement of the Cushites beyond a doubt. It is as erroneous to limit them to Arabia alone, as to assign to them exclusively the south of Africa. Their connection with Egypt is, indeed, more clearly defined; Ethiopian emigrants peopled, if they did not civilize, Egypt; Ethiopia was, at some periods, partly subjected to Egypt, at others prescribed to the Upper Egyptians their laws, and gave them their kings; now received the Egyptian warriors, who left Egypt in the reign of Psammetichus, and founded an independent state; and now were in alliance with the Egyptians and Libyans. But, the derivation of Arabic tribes from Cush; the notice, that the river Gihon, coming from the region of the Euphrates, encompasses the whole land of Cush (ii. 13); and the "topaz of Cush," which points either to the shores of Arabia, or to the small island Topazos in the Red Sea, are proofs that the term Cush comprised at least the tracts on the shore of southern Arabia also, an extension of the name, employed by Syrian writers even of a very late period. It will be our task, in every individual passage, to determine the exact locality which is intended by Cush. It was sufficient to have briefly described the general comprehensiveness of the term; it would lead us to large digressions were we to attempt to exhaust the subject here. Cush's eldest son—

1. *Seba* is, in the Old Testament, mentioned as a nation in the distant south, of nearly the same importance as Egypt and Ethiopia themselves; it is an extensive and mighty people, of undaunted strength, and, like the Macrobii of Herodotus, of

imposing stature; their land is intersected by streams; and it will be the greatest triumph for Israel and their God, if Seba is subdued and enslaved. Now, Josephus informs us, that Seba, the royal city of Ethiopia, was, by Cambyses, called *Meroe*, after the name of his own sister. It would be arbitrary to reject unconditionally the decided statement of Josephus, especially as it is confirmed by Strabo; and is, in a somewhat modified form, repeated by Diodorus. And Meroe answers, indeed, all the conditions required for the identification of Seba. It is, by ancient geographers, frequently described as an island, but it is, in fact, a tract of land, 375 miles in circumference, enclosed by the rivers Astapus (Bahr el Asrak) and Astaboras (Tacazze), and extending to the narrow tract where the latter river joins the Nile. In the east and west it is bounded, respectively, by Abyssinia and Libya, whilst its extreme southern frontier lies 873 miles from Syene. The fertility and wealth of this district of Meroe are testified by all ancient authorities; it boasted of mines of gold, iron, copper, and salt; it had large woods of date-palm, almond-trees, and ilex, sufficiently productive to allow extensive exports; the forests abounded in game which served for food; the meadows produced double harvests of millet, and the pastures were covered with fine herds of cattle; in the north, where rain but seldom falls, careful irrigation is necessary; but less art and labour are required for the fertilization in the south, and in the valley of Astaboras. Agriculturists, shepherds, and huntsmen divided these territories among themselves. The town Meroe was situated about 90 miles (700 stadia) south of the junction of the Nile and Astaboras; extensive ruins of it have been discovered, about twenty miles north-east of the Nubian town Shendy; and among them are (at Naga-gebel-ardan) those of four temples, the largest of which was dedicated to Ammon, an edifice in which the principal portico is detached from the main building; it is adorned with an avenue of sphinxes, and with historical sculptures. But many other remains in the east and west of the Astapus, for instance at Woad Naja and El Mesaourat, and especially the many pyramids scattered over the plains or combined in groups, though a great part of them may not be of a very remote antiquity, prove the former existence of large and numerous cities. These were evidently the centres of a very lively commerce; they were traversed by the caravans from Libya and the Red Sea, from Egypt and Ethiopia; and they received or exchanged many of the most valued articles of ancient trade. Whatever may have been the origin of this prosperity, whether it was the result of the energy and intelligence of native tribes, or of superior and more enterprising conquerors; whether Meroe borrowed its institutions from, or gave them to, Egypt; whether it was occupied by the warriors who emigrated under the reign of Psammetichus, or remained under its own rulers: it is certain, that it belonged, at an early time, to the most flourishing districts of Africa, important enough to be regarded as the settlement of the first-born son of Cush, and to be included in the most emphatic predictions of the Hebrew prophets.

2. *Havilah*, which embraced the whole eastern portion of the ancient world (ii. 11), is not only mentioned among the Cushites, but also, later, among the descendants of Joktan or Shem (ver. 29). We have above (p. 68), and in the concluding remarks on the present chapter, attempted to account for the apparent discrepancy of the Biblical statements.

3. *Sabtah* is explained, by Josephus, as the Astabori, or the tribes inhabiting the territory near the stream Astaboras (Tacazze), which forms the eastern river of the land Meroe. We see no reason for deviating from this view, since it is in perfect harmony with the place occupied by Sabtah in our list. There existed, perhaps, formerly, in the plains of Meroe, a town Sabtah, which might, like many others, have fallen into ruins, since the tropical rains easily destroy edifices built only of palm-branches and sun-dried bricks.

4. The situation of *Raamah* cannot, on the whole, be doubtful, on account of its

dependencies, Sheba and Dedan, and its connection with Sheba, as carrying to Tyre exports in spices, gold, and precious stones. Raamah must, therefore, be sought for in Arabia, in a district rich in those valued products; and here offers itself almost spontaneously the town Regma, situated on the Arabian shore of the Persian gulf, included, by Ptolemy, in the country of the Nariti, and still existing in his time. Raamah was the founder of two other tribes.

a. Sheba is *Saba*, the famous and principal city of Yemen, or Arabia Felix. Sabæa enjoyed an early civilisation; it possessed a political government, perhaps regulated by sacerdotal influence; at its head stood a king, jealously watched in his palace, and never allowed to leave its precincts. The first child, either son or daughter, born in certain noble families after his accession, was the heir presumptive. The character of the Sabæans was less ungovernable and reckless than that of many inland tribes of Arabia. They were reputed as men of a lofty stature, flourishing health, and manly beauty; they formed constantly increasing communities, since whole families from the barren northern districts joined them; and so extended was their race, that they formed many colonies, not only in almost all parts of the peninsula, but in distant northern localities. It is, therefore, a matter of much difficulty to define the exact boundaries of their land, especially as the ancient writers differ, both among themselves, and with the Biblical statements. An attentive comparison, however, of the passages in Eratosthenes and Ptolemy, Strabo and Pliny, leaves no doubt, that it was bordered in the west by the Arabic Gulf, reached in the south to the Indian Ocean, and to the north nearly to the territory of the Idumæans, whilst its extent to the east seems to have varied in different periods, now running even to the shores of the Persian Gulf, and now pressed back into narrower limits by enterprising and warlike neighbouring tribes. It was long considered as the most southern country of the habitable earth; it was, therefore, called *Yemen*, or the land to the "right hand" (that is, the south), or the "distant" country. But, referring to our genealogy, we have here a similar instance to that of Havilah; for, Sheba is again mentioned, in ver. 28, among the descendants of Joktan; it was, therefore, regarded as peopled both by Cushites and by Shemites; and we must suppose, that the former occupied the south-western part of Arabia, adjoining Africa; whilst the latter were spread to the east and north, and might, partly, have consisted of different tribes. We cannot wonder, that the Sabæans, in consequence of their early and lively intercourse with the Indians, adopted many usages, and, perhaps, some religious notions from the latter more civilised people; that they understood, and sometimes even wrote in their language; and that they imitated some of their social institutions; especially as it is probable, that many Indian traders settled here as agents of their native commerce: but it is certain, that, in this genealogy at least, they are not represented as Indian colonists; nor are the proofs, which have been advanced in support of their Indian origin, in any way conclusive; they are either general and distant analogies, or they refer to so recent times, that they cannot, with propriety, be applied to the original Sabæans, whom Arabic traditions generally describe as Shemites, and who, most probably, stood in earlier commercial and social relations with Africa than with India. — The natural productions of Sheba were a source of abundance and wealth; its fertility was, according to Arabic writers, enhanced by majestic works of irrigation which imparted to the numberless gardens and fields a most blooming appearance; it brings forth not only delicious fruits, and many useful animals, especially fine horses; but it yields frankincense and aromatics, with which it supplied Egypt and Syria, by way of caravan trade, although not in so fabulous a quantity as the exaggerations of ancient writers would lead us to believe; for they assert, that the odour of Sabæa's spice-woods is so powerful that the inhabitants were liable to apoplexies, and that they were obliged to counteract these noxious perfumes by the ill odours of burnt goats'-hair and asphaltite; whereas the authentic observations of modern travellers inform us, that the

frankincense of Sabæa is neither peculiarly abundant nor of a quality in any way comparable with that of Sumatra, Siam, and Java. It has rich copper-mines, in the district of *Saade*, which are still worked; and, most likely, formerly possessed the precious metals also, which ancient historians and poets state to have been so common, that the decorations of the houses, the furniture, and even the domestic utensils of the Sabæans were of gold and silver. These extravagant accounts find, however, their explanation in the fact, that the Sabæans were, for a very long time, almost the sole agents of the most extensive and lucrative trade between India and Egypt, and between Egypt and Phœnicia or Syria; and when, later, Egyptian kings founded the emporiums of Arsinoe and Coptos, the Sabæans were wealthy enough to carry on a most lively trade with India on their own account; their ships, which were of unusually large dimensions, and manned with sailors famous for their skill and intrepidity, proceeded along the coast of Gedrosia, so far as Ceylon, and the Malabar coast; and in the time of the Roman Emperors, they gained immense riches from their importations of silk and aromatics. The chief centre of their splendour was their capital, Sabas or Mariaba, situated on a lofty, wooded hill, the richest and most beautiful town of Arabia, and adorned by an artificial land-sea, enclosed with gigantic structures, and formed from the water of the mountains. We cannot be astonished, that this enormous wealth gradually tended to enervate the energy, and to relax the industry of the Sabæans, who are, by the Roman writers, mentioned with surnames indicative of deep social and domestic degradation.

b. Dedan is sufficiently defined by the Biblical allusions, both with regard to its geographical situation and its internal condition. It was a commercial nation of Arabia, which traversed the deserts with their goods; their exports consisted especially of ivory and ebony, which they carried to the markets of Tyre; and their trade resembled in extensiveness and importance that of Sabaea and Tartessus. They are sometimes described as the immediate neighbours of the Idumæans, whose territory is stated to have extended between Theman and Dedan; but in other passages they are called the inhabitants of an island, and are therefore coupled with Tartessus and Greece, and other islands. It is, therefore, evident that the tribes of Dedan settled in two different regions; partly on the north-western coast of the Arabian Gulf, and partly nearer the motherland, Raamah, perhaps on the island *Daden*, in the Persian Gulf, from whence they took part in the trade from India and Central Asia; the intercourse between both colonies was entertained by their lively commerce, and, perhaps, by various intermediate stations along the northern part of the Arabian peninsula; they might, therefore, have been regarded as *one* country; but it is not impossible that the inhabitants of that island were later either subdued by, or, at least, greatly intermixed with, emigrants from other tribes; and hence it may be explained, that Dedan is in our list reckoned with the Cushites, whilst it is in another passage ranged among the Shemites.

5. *Sabtechah*, the last son of Cush, seems to have been the founder of an Ethiopian tribe, the proper abodes of which we have no means to determine; it is nowhere mentioned, except in the parallel passage of the Book of Chronicles; but its obvious resemblance with the Ethiopian name, *Subatok*, discovered on Egyptian monuments, renders its position in Arabia, or at the Persian Gulf, improbable.

Cush was, then, strictly the *southern* zone; it comprised the known countries of the south, both in Africa and Arabia; in the former part, it is bounded by Meroe; in the latter, by Sabaea; and whenever the nations inhabiting these districts, extended beyond the southern regions, either to settle in more eastern or in more northern parts, they were separated from the stem of Cush, and associated with different branches of Shem; we have noticed this feature in the cases of Havilah, Sheba, and Dedan. Only, if the ethnographical relation was quite undisputed, as, for instance, with Raamah, even a more eastern nation was acknowledged as descending from Cush. This part of our

list admits then a historical fact of the highest importance, namely the early connection between the tribes of Arabia and those of Africa, a connection guaranteed, not only by the Arabic character of the Abyssinian language, but by the similarity of the names of towns on both sides of the Arabic Gulf. It is the task of the general historian to pursue further this fruitful subject; unfettered by dogmatic considerations, he will trace the mutual influence of both countries: whether Africans settled in Arabia; or Arabic tribes founded new colonies on the shores, and in the plains of Africa.

But the migrations of Cush did not cease here; another movement of his descendants is recorded, far more momentous than all preceding settlements (vers. 8—12), for it concerns the mighty nations destined to be the formidable lords of the world. The districts round the Euphrates and Tigris must, at a very early period of man's history, have been occupied and cultivated; the fertility of the soil, the salubrity of the clime, and the advantages of position, tempted both the husbandman and the merchant; and the affluence and ease, the rewards of moderate industry, allured from every part new settlers, who readily found abodes and subsistence, and who, far from exhausting, contributed to increase, the resources of the opulent country. This historical view is fully confirmed by the Biblical narrative. The cradle of mankind is, by the author of Genesis, placed near the region where the Euphrates and Tigris join; and the ark which saved the restorer of the human race, ten generations later, grounded near the mountains from which those rivers take their origin. It was, therefore, his opinion that the plains of Mesopotamia were first peopled by immigrants from the north; that here cities were built and fields cultivated; that commerce began to flourish, and the pursuits of peace to be developed. But the arts of war were neglected; the security of life, and the abundance of property, made the happy tribes forget the dangers that threatened them from envy and covetousness; they had applied all their energy to the *acquisition* of wealth, and had reserved none for its *protection*. And from no side were the apprehensions of invasion greater than from the vast and dreary tracts of deserted Arabia, extending, with a few interruptions, from the coast of the Erythræan Sea, to the very borders of Babylonia. The active tribes, stimulated to energy alike by inclination and necessity, too impatient for the tardy rewards of agriculture, and too independent for the shrewd calculations of commerce, accustomed to fight for their lives with the lion, and to prey upon the wealth of the passing caravans, had, in their daily encounters and risks, learnt to despise danger, and, trained in combat and warfare, they thought that courage and fortitude were entitled to rule over inglorious idleness, or toilsome obscurity. The representative of these formidable adventurers is, in the Pentateuch, named Nimrod; he was the first mighty hero on the earth (ver. 8); he was invincible in battle, but proved the infallibility of his spear in the chase also; long were his feats in the forest remembered, and his skill and intrepidity as a huntsman passed into a proverb (ver. 9). But the limits of the sandy wilderness were too narrow for the exuberance of his spirits and the dauntlessness of his strength; he roamed northwards, where he found the large and prosperous town of Babylon; and he discovered other well-cultivated districts in the land of Shinar. These provinces were famous for their fertility; the annual inundations of the two rivers which enclose them secure plentiful harvests, by means of partly navigable canals, and of aqueducts; even in later times they supported the King of Persia, his army, and his whole establishment, for four months of the year; they fed 800 stallions and 16,000 mares, and yielded more than the fourth part of the vast dominions of the Persian king; the climate is mild and salubrious; the majestic date-palms furnish excellent wine and honey, and a nutritious bread, whilst the barley of the Babylonian plains excels that of all the other countries; their amazing fertility is recorded even by modern travellers; their corn produces two and three hundred fold; the blades of wheat reach

a breadth of full four fingers; the millet, and sesama yielding abundant oil, grow to a height incredible to Europeans, except eye-witnesses. All this wealth was doubly fatal to the inhabitants, for it blunted their energy, and invited the marauding aggressor; they fell unresistingly into Nimrod's hands, who here established the first strongholds of his great empire so firmly, that Babylon was henceforth called the "land of Nimrod." But not yet was either his ambition satisfied, or his strength exhausted; he made from Babylon an expedition into the country which was, from the son of Shem, called Asshur; here he founded on the inviting banks of the Tigris, perhaps opposite the spot of the present Mosul, a town, Nineveh, destined to play a prominent part in the history of the ancient world, but in its commencement small and unimportant, and eclipsed in magnitude and celebrity by the great town Resen, which, however, fell gradually into such permanent insignificance, that its name was for millenniums forgotten, and the ruins of its once stately walls and magnificent palaces have, in our days only, come again to light. Now, what is the value and historical meaning of this account? It was a general conviction among the Israelites, that the tribes of Assyria were kindred with those of Aramæa, from which Abraham, the ancestor of the Hebrew nation, had sprung; they were, therefore, necessarily included among the progeny of Shem. Nevertheless the language of the later Assyrians and Babylonians was strange and unintelligible to the Hebrews; it was to them a barbarian tongue, without sense or meaning, a stammering speech, discordant to their ears; further, the history of the Israelites teaches, that they had no more powerful or more deadly foes than the kings of Assyria and Babylon; they were in almost constant conflict with, and in perpetual dread of, those insatiable princes; they entertained, therefore, towards them feelings far from fraternal; they believed that this antipathy was explicable only on the supposition that the original inhabitants of the countries near the Euphrates and Tigris had, at an early period, been subdued or expelled by bold invaders from the south, descended from the hateful stem of the Hamites, who included all the national enemies of the Hebrews. How far this supposition is justified either by the traditions of the Asiatics, or the statements of other ancient historians, or the testimony of the sculptural relics, must be left to future discussion; but it may at once be stated, that Babylon is indeed considerably older than Nineveh, for a dynasty of the former dates, at least, from B.C. 2200, whilst the kings of the latter do not reach higher than B.C. 1300; that Assyria, though long mistress of Babylonia, owed to the latter a great part of her culture; that the names of the very earliest kings of Babylon have the termination *Khak*, which is probably identical with the *hak*, or *hyc* of the Egyptian shepherds, who are of Arabic descent; and that there were Cushite tribes in Babylon termed "the Black," in contradistinction to the *red* inhabitants, who were Shemites; that according to an old Babylonian legend, the powerful Oannes, came from the Erythræan sea on ships to the land of the Babylonians to teach them wisdom, and to fix their laws; that the worship of Bel, in Babylon, is traced to the adoration of Amum, in Meroe, and the Babylonian astrology to Egyptian teaching. So valuable are the ethnographic allusions which our list implies. But they must be understood in their own grand spirit; prejudice must not contract their scope, nor sophistry force their meaning; they were written in characters which will ever be a mystery to the mere philologist, and a dangerous *ignis fatuus* to the historian unimbued with the style and spirit of the Bible. Thus the whole import of this interesting passage has been perverted and contorted; the "*hero*" Nimrod has been transformed not only into a giant, a tyrant, and a ravager, but into a rebel against the authority of God; into a proclaimer of wicked principles, teaching the docile people that they owe all their happiness to their own virtue and exertion, and not to the power or goodness of God; that the Divine rule was an intolerable tyranny, which had inflicted a general flood, but which they could for the

future escape by gathering round one great centre, the tower of Babel; he was regarded as a hunter of men as well as of wild beasts; his very name has been believed to imply impious revolt; he has been identified with the fearful monster Orion, chained on the expanse of heaven with indestructible fetters, to warn and to terrify; he was among the later Arabic writers, the subject of incredible fables, which it is asserted are hinted at in our verses. And all this because Nimrod is here called a "hero," and a "mighty huntsman"! If the word *hero* has, in some passages, the invidious meaning of oppressor and despot, it does not follow that it has the same exceptional meaning everywhere; and if it is believed that the praise of a valiant and skilful hunter is in itself too insignificant to be mentioned, we have the analogy of many powerful kings who valued themselves eminently upon that manly accomplishment, who desired to outshine in it all their subjects, and who ordered it to be specially extolled on their epitaphs; even to the heroes and demi-gods of mythology, it was described as one of their essential distinctions; and on the most elaborate sculptures of the Assyrian palaces, the great king himself is frequently represented levelling his spear against the bull, or directing the arrow upon the infuriated lion; prowess in war, and intrepidity in the chase, were celebrated as merits almost equally honourable. Mere physical strength was, indeed, not very highly esteemed among the Hebrews; they respected power of mind, and especially piety of conduct; we have already compared the history of the Cainites with that of the Sethites, as manifesting the contrast between an external and internal life, between practical activity and religious elevation; we shall find a frequent repetition of this contrast, in Ishmael and Isaac, in Esau and Jacob, and strikingly in Goliath and David, who met his strong-limbed and unwieldy enemy with words pithily expressing that national difference. It was not deemed the characteristic of a religious mind to trust to bow and spear; nor was it regarded as a peculiar glory to be distinguished by feats of bodily strength: but more than this incidental and comparative opinion must not be sought in the remark regarding Nimrod's eminence in warfare and in the chase; he looked for worldly power, but he attained it by energy and boldness; if his aims were not the highest, his means were, at least, honest and brave; he was a heathen, ignorant of the true ends of life, but zealously pursuing those which he had proposed to himself; and his character, though devoid of nobler and spiritual aspirations, commanded and deserved respect. Nor are we compelled to suppose that he cunningly prepared himself for his meditated wars by apparently harmless chases; that he thus gathered round himself a number of valiant men, and then treacherously employed them for invasion and plunder. Who would find this idea in our verses, except those who are determined to explain them by the light of later fabulous traditions?

6. The origin of *Babylon* is, in the following chapter, described with a certain copiousness, since it is connected with events of the highest interest for the human family; the more appropriate place for that section would, therefore, have been before our list, which order is, indeed, observed by Josephus in his narrative; but it was considered preferable to enumerate the various tribes of the earth, before explaining the cause of their dispersion; and the remark, that there was but one language on the whole earth, would have been strange immediately after the account that eight persons, the members of the same family, formed the only inhabitants of the globe.—Babylon was, in early periods, probably a place of no great importance; it was not the residence of the first Chaldean kings, who had their palaces in Mugeyr (Ur) and Wurka (Erech), or in Senkereh and Niffer; it was only about B.C. 1100, that Birs Nimroud (Borsippa, or Babylon) was adorned with the magnificent "temple of the planets of the seven spheres;" and since that time it gradually increased, and assumed at last an extent which we should consider incredible in any other but an eastern capital. It stood, according to Herodotus, in a spacious plain, intersected by the

Euphrates, was quadrangular, and had 480 stadia, or about 55 English miles, in circumference, with a hundred brazen gates; it was surrounded by a deep trench filled with water; on the western side, perhaps, with artificial marshes; and by a wall of fifty royal cubits in breadth, two hundred in height, and so wide, that after buildings of one story each had been erected at the edges, fronting each other, they left a space sufficient to turn a chariot with four horses; the breadth of the wall was, therefore, double that of Nineveh. Edifices three and four stories high formed many regular streets, at the end of each of which was a little brazen gate, opened in the wall, and leading to the river. Within the great wall ran another narrower one, not much inferior to the former in strength. The principal edifices were the royal palace, and the temple of Jupiter Belus, a square building of two stadia on every side, with eight towers, piled one upon the other. Later writers add, that Semiramis built a bridge across the Euphrates, five stadia long; and a palace at each end of the bridge, with towers, embellished with animated paintings of hunting scenes; the western castle being especially magnificent. The area which ancient Babylon occupied, seems to have been not less than 225 square miles; so that when the extreme part of the town was taken by Cyrus, the inhabitants of the central portions were quite unaware of it, and continued the festive rejoicings in which they were indulging; this extent will appear in its due importance, if we consider that London and its environs cover only 114 square miles; but it will be regarded as less extraordinary, if it is remembered that Babylon contained within its walls extensive gardens and fields, the produce of which was said to have, in times of sieges, sufficed for the maintenance of the garrison. Nebuchadnezzar, probably, built chiefly the eastern part of the town, and added a second citadel, or palace, whilst Nabonidus fortified the walls towards the river. In the later Biblical prophecies, the extent and pomp of the world-renowned city are described with a powerful emphasis; and profane writers speak with glowing colours of the hanging gardens, as one of the most extraordinary achievements of antiquity. The Babylonians were, in the period of their prosperity, celebrated for their manufacture of costly stuffs and splendid carpets; but they occupied also a great portion of the Asiatic commerce, carried on both by land and by water as far as India, importing as well as exporting, and especially entertaining a lively intercourse with the northern countries.—Babylon remained in this grandeur and magnificence, which were, however, accompanied by an unbridled licentiousness, till it was, after a long and difficult siege, taken by Cyrus, who, however, far from destroying it, made it his residence during seven months of the year, and only pulled down a part of the walls, if he damaged them at all; but a revolt under Darius, the son of Hystaspes, induced this king to demolish the gates and the fortified walls; and Xerxes plundered, and, perhaps, destroyed the temple of Belus. Babylon was the chief city of the empire even in the time of Alexander, who attempted in vain to restore the temple of Belus, then a gigantic mass of ruins; but when Seleucus Nicator built Seleucia, and transferred to it the seat of government, Babylon gradually lost its ancient importance; it was neglected, and decreased in population; Demetrius Poliorcetes found there but two fortresses; Evemerus, king of Parthia, burnt many of its temples, and the best part of the houses (B.C. 127); in the time of Augustus, by far the larger part of the city was added to the fields; and Strabo describes it as a vast desert. Its vicinity became the stronghold of robbers and highwaymen; it was avoided both by natives and by strangers; in the time of Jerome its area was, perhaps, used by the kings of Persia as a park for hunting; but in the fifth century of the present era, the soil had become almost one large marsh, since the canals drawn from the Euphrates had been filled up; only some Jewish families, with the tenacity belonging to their race, occupied some wretched and scattered houses, whilst even the Euphrates had long changed its course; in the tenth century hardly any remains of the town

were left; and in the twelfth, according to Benjamin of Tudela, huge ruins only of the temple of Nebuchadnezzar were visible; but the serpents and scorpions which had selected them for their retreat, rendered the attempt of approaching them an impossibility. Thus was the proud city, from the abode of the masters of the world, fallen into a den for beasts of prey and reptiles; into a confused quarry, which yielded stones for obscure villages, and for the repair of shattered huts. The most vehement predictions of the Hebrew prophets have been literally realized. For many centuries, these heaps of rocks and sand were regarded by the straying traveller with mingled horror and humiliation; but, at last the awakening spirit of historical investigation made them the object of persevering and intelligent enquiry; the veil which hid the ancient glories was lifted; the earth gave back the treasures which it had devoured; and Time, which had once destroyed, has now abundantly, though tardily restored. We have, in the larger edition of this work, added an appendix to the tenth chapter, embodying a brief sketch of the excavations and their results: we have tried to produce before the reader a summary of the labours of Rich and Botta, of Layard and Rawlinson, and of those energetic explorers who were besides them occupied on the banks of the Euphrates and Tigris. The names of these men will ever be illustrious in the history of antiquarian learning; for they will be associated with empires the astonishment and the terror of the ancient world.

7. Besides Babel, several other towns or provinces were subdued by Nimrod; they were, therefore, considered as the seats of an early civilisation or commerce, and worthy of being mentioned in connection with Babel. The first of these towns is *Erech*. There is at present no doubt, that it is identical with *Orchoe* of Ptolemy, within the marshes formed by the canals of the Euphrates, in the direction of Arabia Deserta; and that it corresponds with the little place *Wurka*. It is situated 82 miles south, and 43 miles east from Babylon, on the Euphrates; its vicinity is covered with a vast mound, called El Assagah (the place of pebbles), or Irka and Irak, clearly echoing the old name Erech. It seems to have been a holy city, consecrated to the Moon; for, many of the bricks that have been examined bear a monogram of that deity. It was, further, undoubtedly a burial-town or necropolis; for an almost unlimited number of tombs and coffins has here been found, whilst they have never been met with in any part of Assyria. "Here, probably, are to be sought the ruins of the tombs of the old Assyrian kings, which were an object of curiosity to Alexander, and which are laid down in that exact locality in the old monkish map, usually called Peutingerian tables." The names of the Greek kings, Seleucus and Antiochus, occurring in cuneiform characters, on tablets found in Wurka, prove that it existed to a late period when many of the larger towns had long disappeared. The inhabitants of Orchoe were, most likely, those Orcheni, whom Strabo describes as an astronomical sect of Chaldeans, near Babylon; and Pliny as agriculturists who banked up the waters of the Euphrates, and compelled them to flow into the Tigris; but whom Ptolemy designates an Arabian people near the Persian Gulf. In this double statement, we may find a trace of the Cushite origin of the inhabitants of Erech, whilst the astronomical skill which is attributed to them may countenance the opinion regarding its sacred connection with the moon. The Orcheni were, at a very early period, governed by kings of the Chaldean race.

8. *Accad*, about the site of which even modern writers believed it impossible to give any decisive opinion, is, by recent researches, indisputably identified; and the various readings of Archad and Accur, which are given by Greek and Syriac translators, and which have misled former expositors into vague conjectures, are, by the same discoveries, sufficiently accounted for. About 58 miles north, and 13 miles east of Babel, is a large mound, about 400 feet in circumference, and rising to the height of 125 feet; on it stands a tower, or an irregular pyramid, almost entirely decayed, and constantly increasing the crumbling rubbish of the basis on which it rises. This mound

is still called, by the Arabs and Turks, "the Hill of Nimrod" (Tel Nimroud, and Nimroud Tepassé); and here, near Baghdad, is a little place, now called Akker-Kuf, Akari Nimroud, or Akari Babel; — the scanty vestiges of a town once undoubtedly great and powerful, and, perhaps, strongly fortified.

9. *Calneh* is a town of the ancient province Chalonitis, probably *Ctesiphon*, on the Tigris, opposite Seleucia, about eighteen miles below the present Baghdad. The town itself may formerly have borne the same name, Calneh, which was only later changed by the Parthian king Pacorus, when it was much enlarged, became a royal residence, and one of the most important towns. The prophet Amos already mentions it as a powerful citadel. In the time of Tacitus it was still a noble city; the emperor Severus carried off from thence 100,000 captives; and Odenathus was unable to destroy its walls. Later, *the two* royal *towns* (Ctesiphon and Seleucia) were comprised under one name, *Al Madain*; and at present, the ruins of *Taki Kesra*, with the Arch of Chosroes, perhaps belonging to the once famous White Temple of the Persian kings, are alone left to indicate their former site.

The four towns, Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, are said to have been situated in *the land of Shinar*. If the position of these towns is, in the preceding remarks, correctly assumed, it is evident that Shinar corresponds with Babylonia itself; it is, not only in our passage, but in Isaiah, distinguished from Assyria; it is, further, different from Mesopotamia; but yet, it had its defined boundaries, and was governed by kings; it is not only in the Old Testament clearly used for Babylon, but the Septuagint renders it so in several passages; ancient writers identify both names; and even later Syriac historians call the region round Baghdad the land of Shinar, and explain it by Babel. Shinar is, therefore, the southern district of Mesopotamia, from the Persian Gulf to the so-called Median Wall, which separated it from Mesopotamia Proper, and which ran from the Tigris, a little north of Sittace, across the plain to the Euphrates; in the west and south-west, however, Shinar extended beyond the Euphrates to the tracts of Arabia. These are, therefore, the original boundaries of Babylonia, or Shinar, or the land of the Chaldees. It is natural that, later, when Babylon became the mistress of Asia, that name should have comprised by far more extensive territories.

From Shinar, Nimrod continued his expedition into *Asshur*, and built here Nineveh, and several other great and important cities. — The original extent of Assyria or Aturia, was very limited; it consisted merely of a long and narrow tract between the Tigris and the chain of Mount Zagrus in the east, and reaching northward to the boundaries of Armenia, or to Mount Niphates; and it coincided, therefore, as nearly as possible, with the present Pashalik of Mosul. It is well known that later writers attributed to it an almost unlimited territory; they identified it with Mesopotamia, Babylon, and Chaldea; they included in it Tyre and the Lebanon, Syria, and sometimes even the tribes of the Pontus Euxinus; whilst the Greeks, with a remarkable confusion, called the Assyrians and Babylonians together, not unfrequently, Syrians. The cities which are mentioned in our verses, besides Nineveh, show that Asshur denotes here, as in ii. 14, a land much more comprehensive than its primitive extent; but though it includes undoubtedly northern, it certainly does not embrace southern Mesopotamia, which was expressed by "the land of Shinar."

10. *Nineveh* was, among the ancient nations, famed for its greatness and magnificence; it was considered larger than Babylon, and was, in fact, the largest town of antiquity. The prophet Jonah describes it as a city of three days' journey, with 120,000 children, or "individuals that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand;" and it must therefore have had a population of at least 600,000 inhabitants; but after its destruction, the imagination of ancient authors was busy in exaggerating its magnitude, till it was endowed with almost fabulous splendour. But its growth was very gradual; in our passage it appears as inferior to Resen; the oldest palace,

or that at the north-west side of Nimroud, was not erected before B.C. 900; and the principal building of Kouyunjik, the greatest glory of Nineveh, was only founded by Sennacherib, about B.C. 700. In this time, it is expressly mentioned as the residence of the Assyrian monarchs; and the prophetic announcements of Assyria's downfall are henceforth chiefly directed against Nineveh. In this period, the commerce of Nineveh was of prodigious extent; it commanded not only the trade down the navigable Tigris, and entertained a constant intercourse with all parts of Mesopotamia, facilitated by the ford of Balad, where the river is passable without a bridge; but its caravans travelled to the distant east and north; it was the centre of the Asiatic commerce, and the connecting point between the east and west; and its merchants, who formed its wealth and strength, are, by the prophet Nahum, said to have been more numerous than the stars. But the day when they should pay with their power for their growing pride and arrogance did not tarry; Nineveh was, about B.C. 625, by the united armies of Cyaxares, king of Media, and of Nabopolassar, king of Babylon, converted into a heap of stones, which soon lost even the resemblance of a city; for not more than 200 years later, Xenophon passed these ruins, without knowing that he beheld the remains of the most magnificent city of the ancient world; and though Alexander the Great was in their vicinity, before the battle of Arbela, none of his historians mentions their existence; and later writers class Nineveh among the cities which have tracelessly disappeared. They have, indeed, preserved the traditions concerning the tombs of Ninus and of Sardanapalus; but how vague this information was, is proved by Ovid, who places the tomb of Ninus near Babylon. Under Claudius and the succeeding emperors, however, a Roman colony, called Niniva Claudiopolis, existed either on the site or in the vicinity of ancient Nineveh; the name of the latter is repeatedly mentioned by the Arabic writers of the middle ages, by Benjamin of Tudela and Abulfaraj, and frequently by Assemani; and all of them state correctly its situation on the eastern bank of the Tigris, opposite Mosul, although they write it sometimes Ninawi, and sometimes Ninue. The ruins which have attracted the attention of the travellers at the end of the preceding and the beginning of the present century, have now been carefully examined; and palaces have been excavated which, even in their dilapidated and crumbled state, excite amazement; their designs have been restored, and the inscriptions partially deciphered. The palace of Kouyunjik, opposite Mosul, was no doubt the residence of the kings of Assyria; and the area immediately surrounding it is the site of ancient Nineveh.

11. The situation of *Rehoboth Ir* is uncertain, especially because this was a name given, like Succoth, to many towns, and occurring in almost every province. The greatest probability is, however, in favour of those extensive ruins on the eastern bank of the Euphrates, which lie about four miles south-west of the town Mayadin, and which still bear the name of Rehoboth.

12. But almost unquestionably the town *Calah* is to be identified with the large mound *Kalah Sherghat*, which lies about fifty-five miles south of Mosul, on the right bank of the Tigris. Calah possessed one of the most extensive palaces, and it is, on the black obelisk of the central palace of Nimroud, several times mentioned as the residence of the king.

13. Between Calah and Nineveh, that is, between Kalah Shergat and Kouyunjik, was situated *Resen*, emphatically and pre-eminently called the *great town*. It appears to us undeniable, if reliance is at all to be placed upon the accuracy of the survey recently made of the mounds and ruins of Mesopotamia, that Resen is identical with *Nimroud*, that once magnificent locality, the remains of which still form a parallelogram of about 1,800 feet in length, and 900 in breadth; which consists at least of seven different extensive and noble buildings; and which includes some of the earliest monuments of Assyrian art. It is situated about four geographical miles south of Kouyunjik, and

nine north of Kalah Shergat, thus completely agreeing, in its position, with the Biblical description. Nimroud seems, then, either not at all, or at least not in early times, to have belonged to the town of Nineveh; it appears not to have been enclosed within the same walls with Kouyunjik; and we can only for certain periods, if at all, admit, that Nineveh formed a square, the extreme points of which were, Kouyunjik, Khorsabad, Nimroud, and Karamles.—According to Diodorus, Nineveh consisted of an oblong square, the two longer sides of which measured 150, the smaller 90 stadia; and had, therefore, like Babylon, a circumference of 480 stadia, or upwards of 55 miles, which would agree with the three days' journey of the prophet Jonah. For, from Kouyunjik to Khorsabad is about 12 miles; from Khorsabad down to Karamles, 15; and, if from here a line be drawn to the Tigris, 13 miles long, we have, from this point up to Kouyunjik, again 15 miles; which four distances, forming almost a complete parallelogram, make the stated number of 55 miles. Nimroud would then lie 7 miles south of the point of the Tigris, which formed the south-western boundary of Nineveh.

II. Mizraim, that is, Egypt, is the second son of Cush (ver. 6). A consideration of the physiognomy and bodily structure of the Egyptians proves, that they are, with indisputable correctness, derived from the Hamites, provided that this term be properly understood. It is not necessary to consider all Egyptians as negroes, black in complexion, and curly-haired; this is contradicted by their mummies, and their portraits; the former exhibit mostly the osteology, and the latter the physiognomy of an Asiatic or Arabic race; they show the skull and the facial outline of the Caucasians; they are, indeed, darker in complexion; brown, with a tinge of red, and great varieties in the shades; they have often a fuller lip, and a more elongated, almond-shaped eye, half-shut and languishing, and turned up at the outer angles; sedate and placid countenances, round and soft features, and large mouths: but these differences are sufficiently accounted for, partly by the influences of the climate, and partly by the intermarriages with the western or Libyan, and the southern or Nubian and Ethiopian races: the valley of the Nile was, no doubt, very early peopled by tribes emigrating from the north and east; and this historical fact was preserved by the tradition, that the Hamites comprise both Arabic and Egyptian nations; although the results of the comparative study of languages are not yet sufficiently established to guarantee a linguistic relationship also. Blumenbach discovered three varieties of physiognomy on the Egyptian paintings and sculptures; and he describes the general or national type as possessing "a peculiarly turgid habit, flabby cheeks, a short chin, large prominent eyes, and a plump form of body." The present Copts exhibit further a certain approximation to the Negro; they have a yellowish, dusky complexion; a puffed face; swollen eyes; a broad, flat, and short nose, and dilated nostrils; thick lips, a large mouth, placed at a considerable distance from the nose; projecting cheek-bones; black and crisp hair and beard; crooked legs, and long, flat feet: for, the influences above alluded to, have, in the course of millenniums, confirmed and increased the modifications from the original type. The descendants of Mizraim are:—

1. The Ludim (ver. 13.) They were a warlike nation, famed for their skill with the spear and the bow, and therefore sought for as auxiliary troops by the Egyptians and Tyrians. It is clear that we must here understand an African nation, and that therefore the Lydians of Asia Minor cannot be meant (see on ver. 22). As conjecture alone is left in a case where all certain notices or inferences fail, we venture to identify Lud here with *Letopolis*, which is, by Stephanus Byzantius, and some ancient travellers, called Letus. Towns dedicated to the goddess Leto, who is identical with Athor, one of the eight higher deities of Egypt, were both ancient and numerous, and later, even a part of Alexandria was called Letöeis. Letopolis, or Letus, was situated in Lower Egypt, just at the beginning of the Delta, a few miles north of Memphis, and belonging to this nomos.

2. About the *Anamim* who are mentioned in no other part of the Old Testament, but who, no doubt, likewise represent either an Egyptian or an Ethiopian town, it is still less possible to give any decided opinion. It is scarcely profitable to mention the various suppositions which have been hazarded on so obscure a point. If we were permitted to increase the number of conjectures, we should point to the similarity of *Anam* and *Anoub*, and propose that the Anamim are either the inhabitants of a town consecrated to the god Anoubis, who corresponds to the Greek Hermes, and is represented with the head of a dog, or the worshippers of that deity generally, whose adoration was, however, chiefly concentrated in the Cynopolite district, a nome of Middle Egypt of the Heptanomis, with the capital *Cynopolis But*; both in the Delta, and in other parts of the country, were cities of the same name, proving the great extent of that religious worship.

3. The *Lehabim* are undoubtedly the *Libyans*, who are in other passages, with a contraction common in Hebrew, called *Lubim*. That name is almost everywhere coupled with Ethiopia and Egypt; and, in fact, Libya, in ancient geography, where it is not ignorantly made a part of Asia or Europe, comprises the third large territory which, together with the former two, constitutes the continent of Africa. It was considered to be bounded by the Nile in the east, and the Atlantic ocean in the west; it reached, in the north, to the Mediterranean; but the southern limits were extended with the progress of geographical knowledge. The existence, and vast extent of Libya, were known to the Hebrews through the Phœnicians, who explored and colonised it at an early period, though they took every possible precaution not to admit others into this new field of enterprize and wealth, which yielded them gold and precious stones, ivory and aromatics. A more careful investigation of the interior of Africa was reserved to our own age, and it has been commenced with encouraging results. Men who will be immortal in the history of geography, have risked their lives in the ardent pursuit of knowledge.

4. We take the *Naphtuhim* for the inhabitants of the Libyan town *Napata*, in the north of the province of Meroe, probably at the eastern extremity of that curve of the Nile which skirts the desert of Bahiouda. It was the capital of an Ethiopian kingdom, and a royal residence, and belonged to the richest and most magnificent towns of Africa. Its connection with Egypt is proved by the character of the monuments preserved among its ruins. A temple dedicated to Osiris, and another sacred to Ammon, both on the western bank of the Nile, contain religious sculptures of admirable execution; they are built after the plan of the great Egyptian temples, and are adorned with avenues of sphinxes. There is, besides, a necropolis, on the gateway of which Osiris is represented as receiving gifts as the god of the lower world. The pyramids, which are built of sand-stone, are in a dilapidated state, but are still infallible witnesses of the wealth and perseverance of their constructors. Two lions of red granite, of exquisite design and execution, dating from the time of the eighteenth Egyptian dynasty, the one bearing the name of Amuneph III., the other that of Amuntuonch, were brought to England by Lord Prudhoe. The position of Napata favoured the enterprising inhabitants in their extensive commercial schemes; it lay within the route of several important caravans; it connected Arabia and Libya, and interchanged their respective products. This city was, therefore, important enough to claim, in the genealogical list, a place among the dependencies of Egypt; it flourished through many centuries, till it was (in B.C. 22), under Augustus taken and plundered by Petronius; after which time it rapidly declined, and soon entirely disappeared.

5. The *Pathrusim* are undoubtedly the land and the people of *Upper Egypt*, or *Thebais*; for the proper noun, Pathros, is an Egyptian name, signifying the *southern* country, so that it might possibly include Nubia also; and the district of Thebais is, by

Roman writers, called *nomus Phaturites.* Although the word Mizraim included originally Thebais, the latter is often expressly added, not only on account of its magnitude and importance, but of the independent attitude which it frequently assumed in opposition to the kings of Memphis; so that it is called by the prophet Ezekiel, the origin of the Egyptian empire; as it seems, indeed, to have been the first colonized part of the country, and the earliest birth-place of Egyptian civilization. It is, however, but natural that, in a geographical list, the part should be subordinated to the whole, though the former may, chronologically, have been of earlier existence. The extent of Upper Egypt is almost fixed by natural boundaries; it is a narrowing valley, included between the islands of Philae and Elephantine in the south, and the apex of the Delta (near Cercasorum) in the north; this is the primitive land, whilst from thence, northwards, begin the alluvial plains which form Lower Egypt, and which are in their climate, their fauna, and their flora, markedly different from the former. In Upper Egypt, the sycamore and the acacia are rarely seen, whilst the palm-tree assumes new and characteristic forms, and the crocodile and jackal, the hippopotamus and the hyena, occur in greater numbers. Later, that district was subdivided into two parts, the more northern one, or Middle Egypt (Heptanomis), from the Delta to Hermopolis Magna; and the southern part, or Upper Egypt Proper (or the Thebaid), from Hermopolis to Syene and Philae. The prophet Isaiah, therefore, appropriately places Pathros between Mizraim and Cush, or Lower Egypt and Ethiopia.

6. *The Casluhim* seem to be the inhabitants of the primitive Egyptian town *Chemnis*, later called Panopolis, which was the capital of one of the principal districts of the Thebaid, or of Pathros; and belonged to the most ancient settlements of Egypt. The name of Ham, or Cham, itself, is evidently contained in its appellation, and this town was no doubt holy to Chem, the Egyptian Pan. The Doric heroes deduced their origin from Chemnis, through Perseus, who was here worshipped, probably as Pthah or Vulcan, in a magnificent temple, fortified by a strong wall, surrounded by a plantation of date-trees, and adorned by colossal statues; and if the Greek tribes had a tradition of their origin from Chemnis, it is certainly permitted to suppose that the earliest colonisers of Philistia emigrated from the same once powerful and populous district; but as they are, in some passages, represented as settlers from the Caphtorim, who are next mentioned in our text, they may have been *increased* from that source; and Caphtor may, for some time, have been the abode of Casluhim also, who later joined their kinsmen in Philistia, when the latter had here acquired territory and power.

7. About the *Philistim* see Commentary on Exodus, pp. 230 and 273. Their power, and the light in which they were regarded by the Israelites, may be inferred from the vehement prophecies pronounced against them.

8. We identify *Caphtor* with *Coptos*, a chief city in the Upper Thebaid, a few miles north of Thebes, and at present called *Kouft*, or *Keft*. The Coptites carried on an extensive caravan trade between Libya and Egypt, and Arabia and India; in their immediate neighbourhood were the great porphyry-quarries; and the adjoining hills yielded emeralds and other precious stones. The city remained long in a flourishing state, and was still important in the latest time of Roman emperors; and that it was of a very early origin, is testified by the ruins still extant in Kouft, which bear the name of Thothmes III., the same whom some authors declare to have been the Pharaoh at the time of the Exodus. It is natural that a people so habitually engaged in distant commercial journeys, should be easily tempted to emigration; a considerable number left Coptos and joined the Casluhim, in the southern plains of the coast of Canaan, where, after having subdued and extirpated the tribes which had before occupied those tracts, they either assumed, or received the name of the "emigrants"; but so that Philistia itself was sometimes called the

maritime country of Caphtor, and that they obtained, either by their number or by their courage, the ascendancy over the former kindred settlers, who were later no more mentioned among the population of Philistia. And if we, besides, suppose that the district of Chemmis comprised originally Coptos also, as there are, indeed, traces of a much higher antiquity of the former, and that from thence the first emigrants proceeded to Philistia; whilst later, when the population of Coptos grew, other colonists followed: we shall have another reason why the Philistines are here represented as settlers from the Casluhim, and later from the Caphtorim.

III. PHUT is, in the Old Testament, either coupled with Cush and Lud, or the Ludim, or with Cush and Persia; the former connection describes it as an African nation; the latter as a warlike, well-armed tribe, desired as allies, and dreaded as enemies. We may explain Phut by *Buto*, or *Butos*, the capital town of the Delta of the Nile, on its Sebennytic arm, and the southern shore of the Butic lake. A city famous for the temples and oracle of the goddess Buto (the Greek Leto), of Horus (Apollo), and Bubastis (Artemis), is still traceable in the modern *Kem Kasir*. As it is more than improbable that in the whole genealogy of Ham, there should not be one representative of the people of Lower Egypt, which became of such painful interest to the Hebrews, the almost perfect resemblance of the names of Put and Buto, may not improperly lead us to suppose their actual identity.

IV. The youngest son of Ham is CANAAN. The descendants here ascribed to him (vers. 15—19), fix the extent of the land which bears his name, from the boundaries of Syria in the north, to Gaza, or almost the Egyptian frontier, in the south, including Phœnicia, and those parts of the southern coast which were not inhabited by the Philistines, whilst it is in the east bounded by the Jordan, although its more powerful tribes manifested a tendency to spread beyond its banks, in the tempting districts of Gilead. If we allow the author of the Pentateuch any geographical knowledge at all, we must admit him to have been familiar with the inhabitants of Canaan, their character and their origin; and if he distinctly represents them as belonging to the race of Ham, it is bold, indeed, on the part of some critics, to transform them into Shemites; for which dictatorial assertion, the only alleged reasons are, that the kings of the Philistines had the Shemitic name, Abimelech; that the five Philistine towns also have Shemitic appellations, and the Hebrews apparently understood the language of the Philistines; whilst they were unable to converse with the Egyptians. Now it is, in the first place, obvious, that in these arguments the Philistines are tacitly substituted for the Canaanites, whilst both are in our list represented as different nations. Further, there scarcely exists a more precarious support than that derived from linguistic inferences; modern studies in comparative philology have shown the relationship of the principal Asiatic and African languages, and have proved especially the general analogy in the primitive, or fundamental notions. That many Hebrews should, in the course of time, have learnt to understand the idioms of the Philistines and Canaanites, is but natural, if we consider their constant intercourse, the vicinity of their domiciles, and their frequent, though unlawful, intermarriages, none of which circumstances assisted them in acquiring the language of the Egyptians. Nor can it be surprising that after the Hebrews had been for many centuries the chief occupants of Canaan, their language should have been called the "tongue of Canaan," whereas we have positive proofs that the Hebrews did not even generally understand the Aramæan language, of which the Canaanitish idiom is said to be a dialect. If the candid student is, indeed, willing to penetrate into the spirit of the Biblical records, he must perceive the direct opposition which prevails throughout between the Canaanites and the Hebrews; in their religious notions and their social organisation; in their ultimate aims and their ordinary pursuits. The former emigrated into the land from the south, the others from the east; the one transplanted into their new abodes all the superstitions and abomina-

tions which they had inherited from their race, whilst the first settler of the others was a believer in the one Almighty God, the possessor of heaven and earth; the one were scattered into many isolated tribes, each ruled by its own sovereign, and following its own policy, and not unfrequently raging in internecine wars, whilst the Hebrews perpetually strove to effect, and ultimately succeeded in obtaining, a political unity under one common head; if worldly splendour, or military renown, formed the highest ambition of the Canaanites, the constant aim of the Israelites was the amelioration of their morals, and the strengthening of their religion; and if the one were reputed as a nation of traders, the others were intended as a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. It is impossible to conceive a greater national difference than that which existed both in the feelings and the life of the two nations; and the war of destruction carried on between them with almost unparalleled virulence, proves that the internal antagonism was so vehement that not even centuries could remove it. But if it is objected that Canaan must, by its position, necessarily be a Shemitic country, we remind the reader that the Canaanites were as little as the Hebrews regarded as indigenous; that Hamites and Shemites lived promiscuously both in Arabia and Mesopotamia; and that if the former inhabited Egypt far beyond the Delta, there is no reason why they should not have spread a little more northward into the plains of Canaan. There is, indeed, a variety of ancient authorities in support of the origin of the Phœnicians from the shores of the Persian Gulf and the southern parts of Arabia, and the objections of recent writers are insufficient to overthrow their statements.

1. *Sidon* was the first-born son of Canaan; and this name includes here Tyre and the other Phœnician towns in Canaan also. Phœnicia was that narrow slip of land, scarcely twelve miles broad, between the Mediterranean Sea and Mount Lebanon, extending about 120 miles from north to south, between Aradus and the river Chorseas or Crocodilon. Sidon was situated on the Mediterranean Sea, four hundred stadia south of Berytus, in a plain scarcely one Roman mile in extent, with a double harbour, the inner one serving as a shelter for the vessels during the winter. It was built on a rising mound, protected by the sea on the north and west, whilst the bed of a river formed a natural fosse to the south, and the high hills shielded it to the east. To its position as well as to the enterprising character of its inhabitants, Sidon owed, at a very early period, an exceeding prosperity, so that it was generally considered the chief town of Phœnicia; was both by Biblical and profane writers used to designate the whole country; received the denomination of "the great city"; and was able to send out numerous important colonies, not only to the districts in its own vicinity, but to Cyprus and the coast of Asia Minor, to Rhodes and Crete, to Cilicia and Caria, and the Cycladic Islands, to Imbros, Lemnos, and especially Thasos, where the gigantic mining operations caused the astonishment of later travellers; to the coast of Thrace and Eubœa, and even to some parts of Sicily and the islands which lie between it and Africa; to Sardinia and Spain, where they founded Gadeira, or Cadiz, at least as early as B.C. 1100; to the coast of Cornwall and the tin districts, and the Baltic or the amber shores; to the northern parts of Africa, where Carthage, Utica, Hippo, and other towns soon obtained wealth and importance; whilst Tyre surpassed all in power, and was, already in the seventh century before Christ, regarded as the representative of Phœnician greatness; and though here not even mentioned, it was admitted to exercise the sovereignty over Sidon, and other towns. The commerce of the Sidonians was lucrative and extensive, chiefly in their manufactures of glass and excellent linen, in purple dyes and perfumes, and the numberless valuable articles which they acquired in their distant journeys and voyages. They were also reputed and sought as skilful builders, and as mariners, who were the first to steer by observation of the stars; whilst their gold and silver vessels, trinkets, and works in bronze and ivory, were esteemed both by Hebrews and Greeks. Although Sidon was, in the ideal distribu-

tion of Canaan, assigned, by Joshua, to the tribe of Asher, it belonged to those cities which were never conquered, and it entered even into alliances with the deadliest foes of the Israelites, and undertook aggressive wars against them, if they did not actually compel them into temporary submission. Sidon surrendered itself to Shalmaneser; but was, both under Assyrian and Chaldean, and Persian dominion, permitted to choose its own rulers; it retained a considerable fleet, and made, under Artaxerxes Ochus, a valiant, though unsuccessful, attempt at independence; a hazardous step, which ended in its capture and destruction. The town was rebuilt, and stood thenceforth successively under the Macedonian and Egyptian, under the Syrian and Roman sceptre. At present, there is a little town, Saida, somewhat to the west of the ancient Sidon, belonging to the Turkish Pashalik of Acre, with about 8,000 inhabitants, who seem to have inherited a part of the commercial spirit of the ancient merchant princes.—The language of the Phœnicians had, indeed, a remarkable affinity with the Hebrew and other Shemitic dialects; the testimony of St. Jerome and St. Augustine, the Pœnulus of Plautus, and the bilingual inscriptions found at Athens, are no more the only proofs of that relationship; it is irrefragably established by the inscription on the Carthaginian tablet discovered at Marseilles, and by that on the sarcophagus of king Eshmun-Ezer, found a few years since; by far the greatest portion of both consists of Hebrew roots. But yet, if even the Phœnician dialect should not be included in the "language of Canaan," which Isaiah mentions as a distinct idiom, the Phœnicians were not, at least in the commencement of their contact with the Hebrew nation, animated with brotherly feelings towards it; they aimed at its extermination; and it was only in the time of David, when the Hebrew monarchy began to flourish, that the worldly shrewdness, for which they were proverbially noted, induced them to cultivate a friendship which promised, and, indeed, procured them unusual advantages. And if they were, further, distinguished by the darker hue of their complexion, their derivation from the Hamites is the more justified.

2. The Hittites, who sprang from *Heth*, lived in the southern part of Palestine, around Hebron and Beersheba; in the mountainous tracts near the Amorites; in Bethel, and in several other districts; spreading so extensively, that the "land of the Hittites" was used for Canaan in its widest extent. They inhabited Canaan already in the time of Abraham; and ranked still among the chief tribes at the period of Joshua's conquests; but they were made tributary by Solomon, although a part of them remained, even in later centuries, under their own kings, and had not even disappeared after the exile.

3. The *Jebusites* had their chief abodes, as is well known, in and around Jerusalem, which bore the name Jebus; but they lived also in the mountains of Judah, which they shared with the Hittites and the Amorites. Though defeated by Joshua, they remained the masters of their town Jebus, which was unsuccessfully attacked by the tribe of Judah; assailed, with the same unfavourable result, by the Benjamites, at a later period; and conquered only by the valour and perseverance of David; after which time it became the centre of the Hebrew monarchy. The Jebusites, however, who are still mentioned after the exile, were never entirely extirpated; Solomon made a portion of them tributary; but the rest maintained themselves even in Jerusalem.

4. The *Amorites* seem to have been the most powerful and the most numerous tribe among the Canaanites; they are frequently taken as denoting the inhabitants of the whole land, and as representing the multifarious forms of their idolatry; they lived not only in the west of the Jordan, in the mountains of Judah, but also in the east between the rivers Arnon and Jabbok, and, perhaps, northward to Mount Hermon; and they formed on both sides powerful kingdoms, five on the western, and two on the eastern side (Heshbon and Bashan), all distinguished by their military fame and their wealth. Though subdued by Moses, and deprived by him of their transjordanic possessions, which

were assigned to Reuben, Gad, and a part of Manasseh, and though, in the west also, conquered by Joshua, they were far from being annihilated; they vexed the Israelites frequently during the whole period of the Judges; but they were subdued by Solomon, and remained in submission till after the exile.

5. The habitations of the *Girgasites* are nowhere clearly alluded to in the Old Testament; they are, however, mentioned in a connection which places them, with some probability, in the middle part of western Palestine.

6. The *Hivites*, who apparently lived for a long time under a republican form of government, gathered round two chief centres; first, in the middle of Palestine, in Shechem and Gibeon, and secondly, in the north, near the foot of Hermon and Lebanon. But, as they did not belong to the more powerful tribes, they were often included under the name of the Amorites; the princes of Shechem, as well as the inhabitants of Gibeon, are alternately called Hivites and Amorites; it is, therefore, unnecessary to suppose, that they gradually extended northward, and conquered a part of the territory of the Amorites. They were defeated by Joshua in the great battle against the united Canaanites; but were, perhaps, only compelled to retire westward; for, in the time of David even they still inhabited their own towns; and Solomon, unable to exterminate them, imposed upon them a tribute.

7. The *Arkites* are, as Josephus states with great probability, the inhabitants of *Arca* or Arce, a Phœnician town at the north-western foot of the Lebanon, between Tripolis and Antaradus, one parasang from the sea. Here an early and famous worship of Astarte (Venus) was established; the town was flourishing in the time of Alexander the Great, to whom a temple was here erected; it preserved its importance under the Roman emperors; here Alexander Severus was born; but it bore the name of Cæsarea (Libani) already before this event. It is later very frequently mentioned by Arabic writers; but, although it successfully resisted a long siege of the first Crusaders, and preserved its prosperity even after its capture under the reign of Baldwin I., it fell a prey to the unrelenting ravages of the Mamlooks. Its ruins are still extant at Tel Arka, four miles south of the Nahr-el-Kebir.

8. In the immediate neighbourhood of Arka stood a mountain fortress of the name *Sinnas*, chiefly inhabited by the marauders who infested the Lebanon; and, though it was destroyed after various sieges and wars, the site preserved the name of Sini; and a little village, called *Syn*, at a small distance from the river Arca, existed still in the fifteenth century. This is, no doubt, the locality of the *Sinites*.

9. The *Arvadites* are unquestionably the inhabitants of the celebrated little island *Aradus*, on the northern coast of Phœnicia, about two miles from the continent, opposite Antaradus. It is no more than seven stadia in circumference, and is, therefore, described, by Strabo, as a rock rising from the midst of the waves; it is elevated in the centre, and steep at the sides. Sidonian exiles first peopled this uninviting place, which, however, soon grew one of the most flourishing settlements, in wealth and importance only inferior to Sidon and Tyre; and was itself enabled to send out colonies, for instance, to Tarsus. After having been ruled by its own kings for many centuries, it was compelled to yield, first to the authority of the Persians, and then to the power of Alexander the Great, and of Ptolemy Soter. But, far from declining, it then rose to still greater prosperity; it was declared a city of refuge, by which right its wealth was greatly increased; it, probably, regained its independence, issued again its own coins, many of which are still extant; and, not long after, we find it offering alliance and support to Antiochus the Great. But, from the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, the town was exposed to many and violent vicissitudes; it passed into the hands of Syria, Armenia, and Rome; and, in the reign of Constans, it was destroyed, to be rebuilt no more. The island itself is still inhabited by about 3,000 persons, living on fishery and navigation, and preserving the traditional skill of drawing fresh water

from submarine sources; whilst the name of the village *Ruad* recalls the original name, and the massive Phœnician walls, partly preserved in different points, bespeak its ancient power and magnificence. — The prophet Ezekiel mentions the men of Aradus with great emphasis, both as experienced mariners, and brave soldiers, in both which capacities they rendered substantial service to Tyre, when in the zenith of its glory.

10. The connexion in which the *Zemarites* are here introduced, demands a locality either in Phœnicia or Syria; and, accordingly, the town *Simyra*, mentioned by Strabo and other ancient geographers, has with almost universal consent been fixed upon. Namely, about 24 miles south-east of Antaradus or Tortosa, near the river Eleutherus, are considerable ruins, surrounded by rich plantations of mulberry and other fruit-trees, and bearing the name of *Sumrah*. This is, probably, the site of the ancient Simyra, which was, at certain times, under the dominion of the Aradians.

11. The Syrian town *Hamath*, called Epiphania by the Greeks and Romans, on both sides of the river Orontes, between Arethusa and Apamea, has become more familiar to us by the recent discovery and explanation of the Assyrian inscriptions; it occurs several times on the black pyramid, from which source we learn that it was, like most of the other Syrian towns, attacked by the kings of Asshur, sought protection in an alliance with neighbouring cities, and was several times defeated without being materially weakened; it even organised, under the King Arhulena, an expedition against the mighty king of Nineveh; but, according to the Assyrian monuments, it was subdued, together with its allies; though we find it, later, once more at war against King Shalmaneser. It is, indeed, in the Old Testament, designated "the great" town, for it had extended its possessions far beyond its original limits; "a land of Hamath" is, therefore, sometimes mentioned, including the town Riblah, and the extreme northern frontier of Palestine; whence it could, in our passage, be included among the descendants of Canaan; and St. Jerome states, that, in his time, even Antiochia, which is 101 miles north of Epiphania, was comprised under the name of Hamath; it stood under its own king, and was, in the time of David, in alliance with the Israelites; and though subdued in the reign of Jeroboam II., the son of Joash, it preserved a certain independent position, till it tempted the irresistible arms of the Assyrian despots, who, when at last succeeding in conquering it, did not cease to glory in this achievement with particular pride. Its prosperity, however, was only interrupted, not destroyed; it developed itself anew under the sovereignty of the Syrians, rose to higher political importance in the middle ages, and is still one of the most prosperous towns of Syria, with a very large population, and with the celebrated immense Persian wheels, seventy or eighty feet in diameter, driven by force of the current, for raising water to the upper town. A lofty mound marks the site of the former castle.

These are the descendants of Canaan, who, though originally forming one great family, spread through the wide extent of the country reaching from Sidon in the north down to Gaza and Gerar in the south, and to the Dead Sea and the Jordan in the east (vers. 19, 20), comprising also the territory of the aborigines and of the Philistines. For to the districts of the latter belonged

Gerar, which was situated in a valley (perhaps the Vadi el Scheria), in the south of Palestine, near Beersheba, between Kadesh and Shur, and was inhabited chiefly by a pastoral population; it was already, in the time of Abraham, presided over by its own kings, and may, in those early ages, have exercised a political influence over other parts of Philistia also. Its remains are, perhaps, still extant in the ruins of the old town Khribet-el-Gerar, three leagues south-east of Gaza, between this place and Elusa.

The position and history of the strongly fortified Philistine town, *Gaza*, which was, perhaps, the capital of the province, are too indisputably known to require

more than a brief notice. It was situated on a lofty mound between Raphia and Ascalon, in the caravan and military road to Egypt, about 20 stadia from the Mediterranean Sea, where it commanded the stormy harbour Majumas, later, in the reign of Constantius, for a short time detached from it, under the name of Constantia. It may, originally, like the whole district, have been inhabited by the Avim, till the latter were from thence expelled by the immigrating Capthorim, or Philistines. Although Gaza was assigned to the men of Judah, and was, indeed, conquered by them, it soon gained, and almost uninterruptedly maintained, its independence, except that, during a short time, it was subjected by the Egyptians, and, perhaps, by the King Hezekiah. Alexander the Great, astonished at the massiveness of its spacious walls, and seriously humiliated by the resistance which he experienced, took it only after a contest of five months, and after having erected the battering engines on an artificial mound 250 feet high, and a quarter of a mile in width; however, he did not destroy it; it played a prominent part in the subsequent wars; and seems, in the times of the Maccabees, to have recovered its ancient power. Destroyed by the king Alexander Jannæus (B.C. 96), and rebuilt by the Roman general Gabinius, it belonged, first to Herod, then to the Roman province of Syria, and continued to be an influential and independent town. Plutarch calls it the greatest city of Syria; it had a senate, of five hundred members, and enjoyed a democratical government; it struck its own coins, many of which are preserved, and prove that it was a sacred city, and enjoyed the right of asylum, and that it was, at that time, chiefly peopled by Greeks; for they bear the images of the principal Grecian deities, and the inscriptions of Minos, and of Marna, who is the Cretan Jupiter; whilst the fair which Hadrian here held for the sale of the captured Israelites, and to which it owed for many centuries the name of Forum Hadriani, shows its commercial reputation. Although the inhabitants clung long with a rare tenacity to their pagan traditions, it became one of the earliest episcopal sees; and it is not inconsiderably mixed up with many important events of the middle ages. A town in a rather neglected state, but with more than 10,000 inhabitants, bears still the ancient name, Azzah, the principal part of which is situated on a hill rising between 50 and 60 feet above the surrounding plain, covered with gardens and orchards, whilst two suburbs stretch out on the eastern and northern sides.

About Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, see the notes on xix. 4—25.

As our text evidently describes the boundary lines of the land of Canaan, running from Sidon southward to Gaza, and thence eastward to the Dead Sea, to Sodom and Gomorrah; it follows, that *Lasha*, the last town here mentioned, must be situated beyond the Dead Sea, forming the utmost point to which Canaan was believed to extend in the east. The position of Callirrhoe, therefore, which place is, by Jerome and several ancient translators, understood to be Lasha, has every probability; and it is as unnecessary as it is fruitless to insist upon other conjectures. Whether a town was ever founded near the celebrated hot sulphureous springs of the river Callirrhoe, has been made doubtful by the recent examination of its valley, which is too narrow to allow of the erection of extensive buildings; but houses were here undoubtedly built for the reception of the invalids who, like Herod, availed themselves of these salutary waters; the fragments of tiles and pottery still found at the principal spring, about one hour and a half east of the Dead Sea, and the ancient (Roman) copper medals here discovered, prove that this part was not uninhabited; and the limited extent of the place was sufficiently overbalanced by its natural importance and its renown, to be employed, in our passage, for the description of Canaan's eastern boundary. The river Callirrhoe, to which the sulphur deposited on it imparts a brilliant yellow colour, precipitates itself, from rocks between 80 and 150 feet high, forming a chasm 122 feet wide, into the plain; its original hot stream is, within the space of half a mile, increased from four sources of

an equal temperature (about 94°); and it rushes, in a southerly direction, with extreme velocity into the Dead Sea. The valley itself, in which, during the summer, an oppressive temperature prevails, is densely covered with canes, aspens, and palm-trees.

III.—THE SHEMITES. Vers. 21—31.

Our list passes, lastly, over to those branches of the human family, which form the chief interest of the Biblical narrative, and for whose sake principally this elaborate pedigree has been inserted. That this was the clearly defined end of the author, is obvious from the introductory remark, that Shem was "the father of all the children of Eber"; he now hastens, with an almost impatient step, to the glorious ancestors of the Hebrews, after having assigned to them their accurate position among the other nations of the earth. Shem is significantly called the elder brother of Japheth, not of Ham, because he should not even be compared with the curse-laden and frivolous man; and although it was a historical fact, too generally adopted to be concealed, that the southern regions of the globe were peopled before the northern and western parts, and that the Hamites were more primitive than the Japhethites: the highest antiquity was, with universal consent and great probability, ascribed to the central districts inhabited by Shem.

I. Elam not improperly occupies the first place among the Shemites. He represents the vast district of *Elymais*, which long maintained a respectable position by the side of Assyria and Media, though it temporarily obeyed the former, and Babylonia; it was governed by its own kings, and formed a most powerful commonwealth; it was the only nation which, far from being subdued by the Parthians, imposed a tribute upon them; it is, both by Biblical and profane writers, celebrated for its prowess in battle and its skill in archery, though it was neither deficient in the ability nor the perseverance for husbandry; and it was even in the time of the Persian empire so powerful, that the whole country bore the name of Elam, and the capital, Susa, belonged to its territory. It is difficult to fix its exact boundaries, especially as the various classical writers differ widely in their statements; no doubt, because the extent of the district changed in different times, according to the success of their arms, or the invasions of mightier conquerors. In our passage, where it is distinguished from Assyria as well as from Media (ver. 2), it most probably embraces the countries in the south and east of these two empires, down to and along the Persian Gulf, and, no doubt, comprising the territory of the later kingdom of Persia, which name is not mentioned in our list, and which Elam here represents. That it, however, does not include Babylonia, needs scarcely to be remarked.

II. About Asshur see pp. 178 and 174; from the remarks at the latter place, it will be understood with what justice or propriety Asshur was included among the Shemites, whilst its principal towns were peopled by Hamites (vers. 11, 12).

III. Arphaxad is here evidently also intended as the representative of a nation, not as a mere mythic person, denoting some abstract historical fact, as, for instance, the "point of separation of the languages." In connection with Elam and Asshur, nothing is more natural than to point to the northern district of Assyria, *Arrhaphachitis*, which adjoins Media, and extends chiefly on the southern side of the Gordyæan mountains.

The direct descendants of Arphaxad are the children of *Eber*, or the *Hebrews*, who is the father of *Peleg*, but between the two former intervenes *Salah* as the connecting link. We have here the only instance of a genealogical descent to the fourth generation; but it is enough to trace the apparent course of the progeny of Arphaxad. From the boundaries of Armenia, his immediate descendants, the Salahites, spread along the eastern side of the Tigris, and in the mountains of the Median highlands; a part of their population gradually wandered and settled beyond the Tigris and Euphrates,

whilst the chief stock of the latter, in their turn, no doubt urged on, and accompanied by, a general commotion of nations, was the origin of extensive and distant colonies in the wide tracts of Arabia, to the Indian Ocean in the south, and the Mediterranean Sea in the west. This progress of nations is so natural, that we feel no hesitation whatever to declare the names of our verses as those of authentic historical tribes, in the sense, however, explained in the introductory remarks to this chapter; they were intended, and, at least, believed as such by the author of our list.

The name, "the children of Eber," is here attributed to all those who crossed the rivers of Mesopotamia, and thence proceeded westward or southward; it was, therefore, originally not limited to the Israelites, who were, indeed, in their intercourse with foreign nations, invariably called Hebrews, that is, those who came from the other side of the river Euphrates, but who properly bore this name only as members of a larger family of nations; whilst they applied to themselves the distinctive, or theocratic, appellation of Israelites. However, the usage of their idiom gradually restricted the word Hebrews also to their tribes alone, a change easily explained by their isolation from kindred nations; and hence the name of Hebrews is, in the Old Testament, applied to no other people.

The younger brother of Eber is *Joktan*, the reputed ancestor of Arabic tribes occupying large districts. Although the extent of the territory peopled by his descendants is stated with some accuracy (ver. 20), it is only to the attention of modern travellers that we owe the information, that, about a three days' journey north of Nedsheran, are a province and a town of Kachtan, which is the ancient Arabic name for Joktan. It is no matter of surprise, that the zeal of the Arabians was busy to fix and to enlarge the traditions concerning the ancestor of their chief tribes. They assert, with confidence, that Kachtan is the father of all the pure and genuine Arabians of Yemen, through his eldest son Jareb, whose grandson, Saba, gave birth to the future founders of the various noble communities, whilst they derive from Adnan the origin of the mixed, or later tribes.

1. About the eldest son of Joktan, *Almodad*, it is impossible to give any decided opinion, although the word itself betrays its origin by the Arabic article.

2. *Sheleph* represents, perhaps, the *Salapeni*, mentioned by Ptolemy as an inland tribe of Arabia Felix, in the south-east of the present Medina.

3 and 5. *Hazarmaveth* and *Hadoram*, appear to belong to the same district; the former is the ancestor of those *Chatramotitae*, who settled in the south of Arabia, near the Arabian Gulf; here incense and myrrh grow in luxurious abundance; and the capital, Sabotah, was the general market for these precious products. The inhabitants gradually acquired considerable wealth, and they were reckoned among the four most important nations of Arabia. There is still a fertile district, the extent of which is differently stated, of the name of *Hadramaut*. The inhabitants, who are of a very active disposition, carry on a lively commerce in frankincense, myrrh, gum, and other products; their language is a dialect materially different from that spoken in Yemen. The Adramitae, or descendants of *Hadoram*, inhabited a part of the same province, especially on the coast, and participated in the same lucrative spice-trade.

4. As *Jerah* is mentioned between the two last territories, it must undoubtedly be situated in their vicinity; and we, therefore, readily adopt the opinion that Jerah (signifying the Moon) is the coast and mountain of the Moon, in the neighbourhood of Hadramaut. If the Hebrew word is a translation of the Arabic name, or if, perhaps, the reverse is the case, this is no more than almost all languages have done in similar instances.

6. The name *Uzal*, as *Sanaa*, the capital of Yemen, was originally called — and, perhaps, still traceable in its present suburb Oseir, chiefly occupied by about 2,000

Jews—was in use till at least the sixth century of the present era. It was one of the oldest commercial districts of Arabia, and the natives themselves attribute to Sanaa an almost fabulous antiquity. It stood in lively intercourse with Tyre, and had, perhaps, its own port, Javan. In this case, it is more than probable that they extended their maritime expeditions to India; from whence they exported cinnamon, cassia, and perhaps manufactured iron, although they appear to have excelled themselves in the last named article. Sanaa is situated on a plateau 4,000 feet above the level of the sea; the air is most salubrious, and an almost equal temperature pervades during summer and winter; the rain, which falls within the months from June to August, descends generally during the night; but the district not unfrequently suffers from protracted draughts, and, in consequence, from fearful famines. The inhabitants are still celebrated for the manufacture of certain beautiful stuffs.

7, 8, 9. *Diklah, Obal,* and *Abimael,* are no more to be ascertained with any degree of certainty; although Diklah has conjecturally been taken for the Minaei (near Mecca), a region rich in *palm-trees,* or, with scarcely any probability, for the tribes at the mouth of the Tigris; Obal for the Avalites, on the eastern coast of Africa, near Bab-el-Mandeb; and Abimael for the Mali, whose very name is doubtful. The frequently shifting tribes of Arabia defy our identification, the more as they seldom leave lasting monuments of their stay, and their earliest written documents which have reached us are considerably later than the beginning of the Christian era.

10. About the *Sabæans,* see p. 171.

11. The incredible fluctuations which have prevailed, and still exist, concerning the locality of *Ophir,* are indeed astonishing, if we consider the copious and almost unmistakeable Biblical statements. Our present passage alone is sufficient to decide its general situation. It cannot be sought in any other country but in Arabia; for the tribes of Joktan are, without any exception, Arabians, and the boundaries within which they lived are distinctly stated (in ver. 30); if Tarshish lies beyond Greece, and Babylon beyond Cush, their distant position is sufficiently clear from the context; whereas, both in the notions and the language of the ancients, Joktanites and Arabians were synonymous. Ophir is here mentioned between Sheba and Havilah, the situation of which, in Arabia, is undisputed; all difficulties which have been found in the Arabic position of Ophir are artificial or trifling; the goods which King Solomon, assisted by the Tyrian monarch, Hiram, and his famous mariners, imported from Ophir, and which consisted of gold and silver, of precious stones, ivory, and sandal-wood, of apes and peacocks, were either native products of eastern Arabia, or were, from India, brought to those parts, either by an active caravan or coast trade, to be carried to Egypt or Syria; and Arabians as well as Phœnicians engaged in these remunerative pursuits. If at present these districts do not yield the precious metals, because the mines are either exhausted or neglected, it would be arbitrary and fanciful to oppose a mere denial to the unanimous testimony of profane and sacred writers concerning their former abundance in Arabia; the gold of Ophir was particularly plentiful; it was so much esteemed, that the word Ophir alone gradually assumed the meaning of purest gold; and the prodigious wealth of Solomon was chiefly derived from that source; the name itself is Arabic, and signifies the *opulent country;* and the existence of peacocks there cannot be disproved; and although ivory and sandal-wood were chiefly, if not exclusively, found in India, they were at least equally accessible from Ophir; the notice in the Books of Kings and of Chronicles, that the ships of Solomon went to Ophir every three years, can by no means be used as an argument against so neighbouring a land as Arabia; for it is not even necessary to point to the extreme slowness of ancient navigation along the coast, especially in the dangerous waters of the Arabic Gulf, or to the incessant winds which, in the northern part of the Red Sea, blow nine months almost constantly downwards, and, in the southern part, as long upwards, whilst they

are changeable in the middle; or to suppose, that the ships of Solomon had to wait in Ophir for fresh arrivals of cargo from India: those passages in the historical books state simply, that between one voyage and the other intervened a period of three years; how long the ships remained in the port of Eziongeber to be refitted, and, perhaps, to be filled with export goods, it was unnecessary to add; and we have other notices which seem to prove an *annual* journey to Ophir and back. It is, therefore, undoubted that Ophir was an Arabian district, either on the southern or south-eastern coast.

12. About *Havilah*, see p. 170.

13. *Jobab* is, according to the etymology, a district in *Arabia Deserta*; but more than this we are unable to ascertain.

The Hebrew author is not satisfied with enumerating the brotherly tribes of the Joktanites individually and separately; he cannot dismiss them without describing their abodes as a whole, and as a continuous country; and he does this with an accuracy which is a new proof of his extensive information, as well as his carefulness. The Arabians are said to have dwelt "from Mesha towards Sephar to the mountain of the east." We are, fortunately, at present enabled to fix these three localities with a probability almost amounting to certainty. Before the Tigris discharges its floods into the Persian Gulf, it divides itself, at the confluence of the Karun (Pasitigris) and the Shat-al-Arab, into two branches, and forms the island *Mesene*, at once a river- and a sea-island. This is the Mesha of our text. It had its own rulers, and was even, in later times, not without political influence. It was of great importance for the commerce of the Euphrates and of the Persian Gulf, and for the possession of the coast-districts. The boundaries of Arabia extend, then, from the extreme north-western point of the Persian Gulf towards *Sephar*. Between the port of Mirbat and cape Sadjir, and belonging to the province of Hadramaut, along the coast of the Indian ocean, and a little inland, are a number of villages called *Tsafar*, or, by the natives, *Isfar*; and near one of them, in Belid or Harikam, are the magnificent ruins of the ancient Sephar, once the seat of Himyaritic kings, and boasting primeval antiquity. The line indicated by our text runs, therefore, from north to south and south-west, till it reaches "the mountains of the east," that is, that range of peaks which is known under the name of the mountains of *Nedshd*, and which intersects central Arabia, in an almost unbroken line, from the vicinity of Mecca and Medinah, to the Persian Gulf. These limits are comprehensive enough to include Sheba and Havilah, Uzal and Ophir.

IV. The fourth son of Shem is LUD. The enumeration of the nations of the Shemites is evidently more systematic than that of the other great branches of the human family; the progress from Elam to Asshur and Arphaxad is geographically so continuous, that we must suppose a similar regularity in the advance to Lud and Aram. And yet we can scarcely avoid identifying Lud with the *Lydians*, who were originally called Ludi. But Lydia lies in the distant west; there is, therefore, a sudden and unprepared step over the whole of Asia west of the Tigris, as far as the Ægean sea. But the history of Asia Minor is here sufficient to remove the difficulty and to decide the dilemma. The tract of land between the rivers Hermus and Mæander, which formed later the chief part of Lydia, was originally peopled by a Tyrrhenian or Pelasgian race, the *Mæonians*, under which name alone its inhabitants are mentioned by Homer. In the eighth century before Christ, however, a tribe which ancient writers describe as wholly different in descent, invaded the land from the east, and subdued the Mæonians. These were the Lydians. For some time after this conquest, both nations are mentioned promiscuously; but the governing race of the Lydians obtained gradually the preponderance so completely, that the land was called Lydia instead of Mæonia, and its original inhabitants either merged in the strangers, or retired to the northern parts of the river Hermus, where, even in later times, they formed distinct

communities. The original abode of the Lydians cannot, therefore, on the whole be held to be doubtful; no tradition represents them as invaders from the sea; their language was totally different from that of the Greeks, who called it like that of their kinsmen, the Carians, a barbarous tongue; and the earliest historical reminiscences connect even the first Mæonian dynasty with Assyria. They were, then, from choice or necessity, induced to leave the southern parts of *the highlands of Armenia* to find new homes by force of arms; for the ancient Lydians were an extremely brave and warlike nation, renowned especially for their excellent cavalry, before the despotic and infamous policy of Cyrus converted a nation of warriors into a tribe of dancers and singers; but even under the Persian dominion they formed the most important satrapy of Asia Minor; and the fertility of their plains, and the excellence of their climate, secured ease to their lives, and cheerfulness to their character.

v. The ARAMAEANS, or the descendants of ARAM, as distinguished both from the Babylonians and Assyrians, were supposed to have chiefly inhabited the northern part of Mesopotamia, which was, accordingly, called "Aram of the two rivers," above the Median Wall; further, the districts westward as far as Syria, which, thence, bore the name of "Aram of Damascus," though this appellation was originally only applied to the immediate territory around that town; they spread, also, beyond the Euphrates, in many parts of Arabia Deserta, and we find their traces in Aram-Maachah, in the east of the Jordan, near Bashan; in Aram-Beth-Rechob, near Lachish, or Dan, in northern Palestine; and besides various other towns, in the mighty commonwealth of Aram-Zoba, probably between the Euphrates and Orontes, north-east of Damascus. Aramæa was, therefore, understood to comprise the wide territories between the Tigris and the Syrian coast of the Mediterranean, and from the Taurus, indefinitely southward down to the Arabian tribes. But frequently even the southern districts of Mesopotamia are included in that designation, which, indeed, in accordance with its etymological meaning of high-land, was variously attributed to different mountainous or hilly regions, in opposition either to the low-lands of Canaan, or to the *plains* or *fields* of Aram, which were other names for Mesopotamia. In our list, therefore, not the whole of this country is assigned to the Aramæans; for, whilst the southern districts were inhabited by Cushite settlers, the northern parts were peopled by tribes which had probably immigrated from the north, and whose language and notions proved them to be original kinsmen of the Israelites. The Aramaic idioms, the Chaldee and Syriac, belong to the stem of the Shemitic languages, and the variations which they show from the Hebrew, imply dialectic rather than fundamental differences, sufficiently accounted for by the climatical and social conditions, and by the foreign influences to which Aramæa was exposed; at a later period, Hebrew received no inconsiderable Aramaic tincture; the Aramæan language was even spoken by Assyrian officers; and it was used by the Persian kings in public documents. Nor did the political relations between the Hebrews and Aramæans show protracted national animosity; for, although David combated against, and defeated the powerful king Hadadeser of Aram-Zoba, his successor entertained friendly connections with the growing commonwealth of Damascus; till both were forced under the Assyrian yoke. The sons of Aram are:—

1. *Uz.* The position of the land of Uz, which is immortalized by the Book of Job, may, with some accuracy, be determined from the following facts. It lies in the vicinity of the nomadic Sabæans, of the marauding Chaldeans, and of the Idumæan town Teman, about five miles from Petra, the birth-place or residence of the chief friend of Job, but yet not belonging to the district of Idumæa, although Edomites later conquered, or, at least, inhabited it. It occupied, therefore, a tract of the Deserted Arabia, between the territories of the Idumæans and the Euphrates. That a country lying so far to the south, should be brought into genealogical connection with Aram, will not surprise those who consider the great, and, to the south, almost indefinite, ex-

tent of the Aramæans. Some valuable hints concerning the life and the social relations of the people of Uz may be gathered from the opening chapters of the Book of Job, whilst we learn from Jeremiah (xxv. 20), that they possessed a monarchical form of government.

2. 3. *Hul* and *Gether* are uncertain. Hul may be the province of *Golan* or Gulan, in the east of the Jordan, extending from the Sea of Galilee to the sources of that river, and to the roots of the Lebanon and Hermon, where the Syrian language was spoken, where still in Jerome's time a populous town flourished, and where even now are fertile plains, bearing the name of Dshaulan; whilst Gether may be identical with the kingdom of *Geshur*, to which Absolom fled, which is expressly stated to have belonged to Aramæa, and was situated on the banks of the Orontes.

4. There are reasons to identify *Mash* with the Mysians, and to suppose that the latter immigrated, like the Lydians, from the eastern districts, either compelled by the same necessity, or tempted by the success which the Lydians obtained in their new homes, or, which is most probable, urged on by both causes, since they appear, indeed, to have been a people of less ancient origin. Now, there is an important chain of mountains, forming the northern boundary of Mesopotamia, called *Masius*, and extending from the Tigris, between Nisibis and Tigranocerta, westward to the Euphrates. This mountain has, by some, been considered to be the Mash of our text, an opinion sufficiently probable, but deriving still greater consistency, if we suppose, that the tribes inhabiting Mount Masius emigrated to Asia Minor, where they received, with a slight modification, the name Mysians, as, in fact, ancient writers assert, that Mysia and Mœsia are only dialectic varieties of the same name.

We cannot conclude these remarks without a few final observations upon the whole of this unparalleled list, the combined result of reflection and deep research, and no less valuable as a historical document, than as a lasting proof of the brilliant capacity of the Hebrew mind. The arrangement of the different nations is as much *local* as *genealogical;* their *abodes* are as decisive for their place in the list as their *descent;* therefore the names of Sheba and Dedan recur several times, now among the Cushites and now among the Shemites, because their domiciles were so extensive that they could be reckoned both with the southern and the eastern nations, and because the Arabian peninsula, which is geographically in the middle between both, appeared to belong to either of those great branches. Hence, also, Tartessus (Tarshish) and Cyprus (Kittim), settlements of the Phœnicians, are classed among the Japhethites, although the Phœnicians themselves are numbered among the Hamites. The Medes are separated as Japhethites from the Assyrians and Elymæans, because their territory was supposed to extend indefinitely to the north. Further, the names of this table generally represent *tribes*, but they sometimes denote *countries*, as Mizraim and Canaan. Now it might happen, that a tribe spread beyond the country which originally bore its name: in this case, the same tribe is again mentioned among the population of its new abodes; and, if it was powerful and numerous, it was gradually identified with the whole combined tract of land; this was especially the case with the tribe of Havilah; for although we can no more determine whether it first occupied a Shemitic or Hamitic territory, it certainly later comprised parts of both; and although the *land* of Havilah was then considered as one connected whole (ii. 11), its inhabitants were classed partly among the Hamites and partly among the Shemites. An admixture of the subdued population, which no doubt remained in the newly acquired territories, justified the geographer the more in including them in the other race also. That which the list thus loses, perhaps, in ethnographic accuracy, it fully gains in purely geo-

graphical interest, without, however, denying us many important, and for the most part safe clues in the former respect also. We believe that these distinctions tend to remove a difficulty which has long engaged the attention of Biblical scholars. Total difference of languages and manners in adjoining districts could only be accounted for by immigration; thus the division of Mesopotamia among the Cushite Babylonians and Shemitic Aramæans, was explained by the immigration of Nimrod from the south; and the possession of the Hamitic land, Canaan, by the Hebrews, could only be explained by the arrival of the latter from the east. But blind national antipathies have nowhere influenced the framing of this list, as we have endeavoured to prove.

VI. THE TOWER OF BABEL AND THE DISPERSION.

CHAPTER XI. 1—9.

SUMMARY.—The progeny of Noah left the regions where the ark had landed after the deluge, and they arrived in a plain of the land of Shinar. As they foresaw the great future increase of the human race, they determined to build a town with a prodigiously high tower as a centre of unity. Hitherto they had all spoken the same language, and derived from this common medium of intercourse a great part of their strength. But lest they should proceed still farther in their arrogance and vanity, God divided their languages, so that they did not understand one another; they were by this confusion compelled to leave the tower and the town unfinished, which hence received the name of Babel. From here they were spread over all parts of the globe.—The text then enumerates the representatives of the ten generations between Noah and Abraham, with similar chronological data to those given in the fifth chapter; after which the history passes over to the family of Terah. He had three sons, Abram, Nahor, and Haran; the latter died before his father, but left a son, Lot. Abram's wife was Sarai, who bore him no children; and Nahor's wife was Milcah, the daughter of Haran. Terah intended to emigrate with his family from Mesopotamia to Canaan; but he went only to Haran, where he settled, and, after a longer sojourn, died.

CHAPTER XI.

1. And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. 2. And it came to pass, as they journeyed

1—9. The members of Noah's family had, after the deluge, landed in a certain region, in the highlands of Armenia; here they were believed to have become the parents of the future founders of empires and nations, and to have dwelt and spread for an indefinable period. But they were tempted by more beautiful and more fertile districts; they migrated all southwards as one enlarged family, till they reached the plains of Shinar. Here they settled, and began to form a great fraternal community. Having all grown out of the same parental house, they spoke the same language and shared the same notions (ver. 1). Now, as these were the views regarding the origin of the human families, it could indeed be easily explained how, in the course of time, their increase must have caused them to spread beyond that centre, to occupy even distant countries, and to establish many

in the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. 3. And they said one to another, Come, let us make bricks, and burn *them* thoroughly.

states and commonwealths. This seemed so probable, that the early generations are represented as having clearly foreseen it (ver. 4). But growth of population alone, even if added to the external influences of different climes, was not sufficient to account for the astonishing variety of speech and thought which divided, and mostly placed in direct antagonism, the various nations, once the members of the same primitive family. This new problem necessarily forced itself upon reflecting minds. But it could naturally occupy those only who rejected the idea of aboriginal races, the offspring of the soil of the individual countries; it could, therefore, but cursorily engage the attention of the ancient nations in general. Plato, indeed, mentions the myth that the languages were divided because men arrogantly asked of the gods immortality and eternal youth; there are, besides, some later similar legends, though perhaps tinctured by the Scriptural account: but this question forms no integral part of ancient history or philosophy; whereas it is an essential consequence of the great and fundamental Biblical doctrine concerning the original unity of the human race. The Hebrew writer could neither forget nor avoid it; he was too deeply impressed with the paramount moral importance of the doctrine, to endanger it by any doubts arising from the problem of the difference of languages. But another weighty reason urged him to introduce this subject. Most of the ancient nations possessed myths concerning impious giants who attempted to storm heaven, either to share it with the immortal gods, or to expel them from it. In some of these fables, the confusion of tongues is represented as the punishment inflicted by the deities for such wickedness; the tower by which the rebellious offenders intended to ascend up to heaven, was overthrown by a mighty tempest; they were scattered into various regions, and thenceforth spoke different languages. It was necessary to eradicate such heathen fables, inconsistent with the purer ideas of the nature of the deity: and with the same admirable wisdom which we have already pointed out in several preceding instances, the Hebrew historian converted that very legend into a medium for solving a great and important problem. Nothing was retained but the building of the tower; and this edifice was only intended to reach a great and commanding height; the tradition that it extended up "to heaven" is taken in a figurative sense; no attack against the Divine abodes is contemplated: for the sin which caused, as a deplorable consequence, the estranging variety of tongues, is represented to have been of a perfectly different character. The nature of that offence again reveals the totally spiritual tendency of the Bible. It consists in the immoderate desire for worldly greatness; in the vain longing for fame and glory on earth, and in the proud delusion that a name is, by gigantic monuments, for ever secured from oblivion (ver. 4). The people aspired to that perilous fame which, obtained by conquest and inseparable from violence, averts the mind from its better ends and its purer bliss; a fame, which was the characteristic of those "men of renown," whose impiety and pride caused the universal destruction of the deluge (vi. 4). It is the same appetite for external distinction which was alluded to in the character of Nimrod, the ruler of Babylon, a town which, owing its origin to vanity, and governed by pride, was at last to be the victim of its haughtiness. This future character of the overbearing city is clearly mirrored in the history of its beginning; the same boastful spirit which the prophet Isaiah chastises in the Babylonian prince, "who speaks in his heart, 'I will ascend up to

And they had brick for stone, and bitumen had they for mortar. 4. And they said, Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top *may reach* to heaven,

heaven, above the stars of God will I erect my throne'" (Isai. xiv. 13), prompts here the exclamation: "let us build a city and a tower, whose top may reach to heaven"; but just as there the arrogance is crushed by the words: "but thou descendest into the grave, and into the deepest pit" (ver. 15), it is here checked by the simple, but emphatic remark: "and they left off to build the city" (ver. 8).

Millenniums have passed since the splendour of ancient Babylon was buried under mouldering ruins; the very site of the tower and town was a perplexing mystery; they had indeed been swept away by the "besom of destruction";—it was reserved for our age to dispel the uncertainty, and to produce the authentic proofs of a once stupendous power.

On the banks of the Euphrates, about forty miles south-west of Baghdad, lies the town HILLAH, which, though next to Baghdad and Basra the greatest in the Pashalik, is meanly and irregularly built, narrow and dirty, with dilapidated mosques and public baths; but it is enclosed by a strong wall, and well protected by a garrison, towers and a battery, and contains a population of about 10,000 Jews and Arabs, carrying on a rather animated commerce on the Euphrates. This town is in almost all directions surrounded by immense ruins, appearing the work of nature rather than of men; shapeless heaps of rubbish; lofty banks of ancient canals; fragments of glass, marble, pottery, and bricks, mingled with a nitrous soil which impedes all vegetation, and renders the neighbourhood "a naked and hideous waste," re-echoing only the dismal sounds of the owl and jackal, of the hyena and the lawless robber. These piles mark the area once occupied by the mistress of the ancient world. They commence eight miles north of Hillah, where the ruins of the Mujelibeh, still called BABEL by the Arabs, indicate the northern extremity, or division, of ancient Babylon. The excavations here instituted have, besides several objects of a later period, only uncovered eight or ten piers, several walls branching out in various directions, bricks inscribed with the name of Nebuchadnezzar, and cemented together with bitumen: but no sculptured stone or painted plaster whatever, has been found in the enormous mass of loose rubbish.—The ruins spread from there in many irregular heaps southward along the eastern side of the Euphrates, which breaks the gloomy monotony of the region by the beautiful date-groves lining its banks; they are most probably the remains of the thousands of houses which formed the extensive streets of Babylon; they are, for nearly three miles, scattered in low mounds over the plain, and are enclosed by earthen ramparts, showing the traces of an old line of walls. Then follow, in a southern direction, successively, the ruins of the Kasr, and of the Amran, large and imposing masses. But about six miles south-west of Hillah, at a place at present called BIRS-NIMROUD, and corresponding with the ancient Borsippa, lies a group of ruins peculiarly prominent by its colossal height and extent, standing on the edge of the vast marsh formed by the Hindiyah canal and the inundations of the Euphrates: a dreary pile, unrelieved by a blade of grass, or a single herb.

The huge heap, in which bricks, stone, marble, and basalt are irregularly mixed, covers a square-superficies of 49,000 feet; whilst the chief mound is nearly 300 feet high, and from 200 to 400 feet in width, commanding an extensive view over a country of utter desolation. These are the remains of the far-famed "Temple of the Seven Spheres," most probably the "Temple of Jupiter Belus" of the classical writers, and the "Tower of Babel" of our

and *by which* we may make us a name; *for* we might perhaps be scattered upon the face of the whole earth. 5. And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which

text. It consisted of seven distinct stages or square platforms, built of kiln-burnt bricks, each about 20 feet high, gradually diminishing in diameter, and forming an oblique pyramid. The upper part of the brick-work has a vitrified appearance, and large fragments of such calcined materials are also intermixed with the rubbish at the base, which circumstance might have given rise to, or at least countenanced the legend of, the destruction of the Tower by heavenly fire, still extensively adopted among the Arabians. The terraces were devoted to the planets, and were differently coloured, in accordance with the notions of Sabæan astrology; namely, the lowest stage was dedicated to Saturn, and was stained black; the second to Jupiter, and had an orange hue; the third was constructed in honour of Mars, and bore a red colour; the fourth belonged to the Sun, and shone in a golden yellow, imitating the solar rays; the fifth terrace was white, and sacred to Venus; the sixth blue, and consecrated to Mercury; whilst the highest stage was that of the Moon, and was painted in a silvery green. The earliest record of this temple dates back to B.C. 1100, when Merodach-adan-akhi, a contemporary of Tiglath Pilesar I., is stated to have erected it. Whether he continued a building previously commenced, or whether another edifice existed before on the same spot, we have, at present, no means of ascertaining. It is, however, certain, that he did not finish the temple, and that the parts completed by him were, by the neglect of his successors, allowed to fall into decay. More than five hundred years elapsed before his grand designs were resumed and carried out.

Among the many works by which Nebuchadnezzar desired to immortalise his name, was the repair and completion of this stupendous edifice. He left a part of its history on the two cylinders which have lately been excavated on the spot, and on which we read, according to Rawlinson's translation: "The building, named the Planisphere, which was the wonder of Babylon, I have made and finished. With bricks enriched with lapis lazuli, I have exalted its head. Behold now, the building named the Stages of the Seven Spheres, which was the wonder of Borsippa, had been built by a former king. He had completed 42 cubits of height, but he did not finish its head. From the lapse of time, it had become ruined; they had not taken care of the exit of the waters; so the rain and wet had penetrated into the brickwork. The casing of burnt brick had bulged out, and the terraces of crude brick lay scattered in heaps; then Merodach, my great Lord, inclined my heart to repair the building. I did not change its site, nor did I destroy its foundation platform; but in a fortunate month, and upon an auspicious day, I undertook the building of the crude brick terraces, and the burnt brick casing of the temple. I strengthened its foundation, and I placed a titular record on the part I had rebuilt. I set my hand to build it up, and to exalt its summit. As it had been in ancient times, so I built up its structure; as it had been in former days, thus I exalted its head." The inscription concludes with an invocation to the gods, that this work "may be established for ever, and last through the seven ages," and that the king's throne and empire "may continue to the end of time"; and adds, that Nebuchadnezzar restored the building 504 years after the original foundation by Tiglath Pilesar I.

But Birs-Nimroud, called Boursa by the Arabs, probably formed no part of Babylon itself; it was a separate temple in its vicinity, in the town *Borsippa*, to which Nabonidus fled when Babylon was taken by Cyrus; to which Alexander repaired when one of the Magi warned him not to enter Babylon a second time; which ap-

the children of men built. 6. And the Lord said, Behold, the people *is* one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do; and now they will be restrained

pears on the Black Obelisk, and several other Assyrian monuments, as a town of Shinar; and which Strabo mentions as a Babylonian town, sacred to Diana and Apollo, and renowned for its linen manufactories. — The temple of Jupiter Belus with its tower, constructed of kiln-burnt bricks cemented with bitumen, was regarded as one of the most gigantic works of antiquity, and attracted the curiosity of travellers from every country. Herodotus, who saw it himself, dwells upon it with emphasis. He describes it as a square building, extending two stadia on every side; the tower was one stadium in length, and one in breadth. On this tower, another was erected, which again bore another, and so on to the number of eight. They were ascended from the outside, by a way running spirally round them, and provided, in the middle, with convenient resting-places.—In the uppermost story, which formed the adytum, was a spacious temple with a golden table for lectisternia; it was, perhaps, also used for astronomical purposes; for the astronomers of Borsippa formed a separate sect; and other planetary gods, besides Jupiter, were here worshipped. —It was partially destroyed by Xerxes, when he returned from Greece (B.C. 490), upon which the fraudulent priests appropriated to themselves the lands and enormous revenues attached to it; and seem, from this reason, to have been averse to its restoration. A part of this magnificent edifice existed still more than five centuries later; but the other part was, in the time of Alexander the Great, a vast heap of ruins; the ambitious Macedonian determined to rebuild it: he issued the orders accordingly; and when the work did not proceed with the vigour and result which he had anticipated, he resolved to undertake it himself with his whole army; he lacked, however, the perseverance of the oriental despots; for, when 10,000 workmen were unable to remove the rubbish within two months, he abandoned his pretentious designs. However, the portion of the structure which was in existence in Pliny's time, was imposing enough to be still called the temple of Belus; and Benjamin of Tudela, in the twelfth century, described it as a brick-building, the base measuring two miles, and the breadth 240 yards; he added, that a spiral passage, built round the tower, in stages of ten yards each, led up to the summit, which allows a wide prospect over an almost perfectly level country; and concluded with the old tradition, that the heavenly fire which struck the tower, split it to its very foundation.

More than six hundred years, the ruins of Birs-Nimroud remained unnoticed and unknown; they were first re-discovered by Niebuhr, in 1756; then more accurately described by Ker Porter, Rich, Buckingham, and the other eminent travellers, who inaugurated a new era in the history of East-Asiatic antiquities; but their examination, and the discovery of some of the monumental records they contain, were reserved to the last decennium. They consist of two distinct parts, but enclosed by the same wall. The western mound, though lower, is larger; it is more than 1,200 feet in diameter, is traversed by ravines and water-courses, and, though composed of loose accumulations of dust, has upon its summit two small mosques, to which the Mohammedans attach pious legends connected with the history of Abraham and Nimrod. It is supposed to represent the treasure-house, the dwellings of the priests, and the temple with the great altar of Belus, where, according to Herodotus, full-grown sheep only were sacrificed; where, on the great annual festival, frankincense to the amount of a thousand talents was burnt; and near which stood a statue of the god, of solid

from nothing which they imagine to do. 7. Come, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. 8. So the Lord

gold, twelve cubits high, coveted by Darius, and taken away by Xerxes, after killing the priest who opposed him. The higher mound, though at present possessing scarcely more than half its original elevation, rises abruptly on the western face, amazing the eye by its gigantic proportions; but ascends on the other side by a series of gradations, which, though much obliterated by violent rains, creeks, and fissures, have been recognised by accurate observers as the sides of several distinct stages or terraces (probably for many periods the usual type of sacred architecture in Mesopotamia), which evidently represent the seven "spheres" above mentioned, and which some conjectured to have served for various astronomical purposes. The walls are of enormous thickness, and allow, at about half their height, an easy circuit round the ruins, as on broad steps; the bricks of the exterior structure, except a part of the eastern side, are kiln-burnt, whilst those of the interior are sun-dried, mixed with chopped straw; and the whole mass is pierced with square holes, probably to admit air through the building. A large number and variety of gems, intaglios, amulets, and other valuable objects, have been found in the rubbish, both by natives and travellers, and many of them have been deposited in European museums. The uppermost part is a solid piece of masonry, twenty-eight feet broad and thirty-five feet high, one of the most beautiful examples of Babylonian architecture, so compact that no stone can be loosened from it, apparently indestructible, and, though split from one end to the other by some unknown catastrophe, still standing erect, with its bricks elegant and perfect. The view from this spot is vast and desolate beyond description; it includes not only the numerous other mounds scattered around the principal group, but the celebrated grave of the prophet Ezekiel, and ruins considerably beyond it.

But although the tower was reared to an immense altitude; the town itself was not completed; the men ceased to build it; and the vast circumference of Babylon's walls without a proportionate number of streets and houses, and with spacious fields and gardens within its precincts, might have given to the stranger the idea of an unfinished city, especially if Borsippa, where the tower of Belus stood, was considered a part of Babylon, as is the case in our text, and seems frequently to have been done by ancient writers, in consequence of the magnificence and prominent importance of that building.

The infinite variety of languages, which so much impedes and incommodes the general intercourse of nations, which is itself both the cause and the consequence of conflicting ideas and conceptions, and which may have been especially striking and bewildering in the plains of Mesopotamia, where the commerce of the east and the west met, and the tongues of all nations perplexed and confused the ear:—this antagonism of languages is, then, represented as the result of the arrogant aspirations of the human families, and as a wholesome check to their growing pride. Their unity had imparted to them a strength and a tenacity of purpose, which threatened to forget all human limits, and to banish that humility which is the root of practical piety. The sin in Paradise consisted in grasping after a spiritual advantage which was withheld for inscrutable reasons; the offence at Babel was the vain longing after external and perishable goods which poison the heart. The curse of exhausting physical labour was the punishment of the former, dispersion and mutual estrangement that of the latter; and in both instances, God Himself stopped the further progress in the same blameable direction by contrasting the past conduct

scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. 9. Therefore is its name called Babel; for there the Lord con-

with the possible future consequences (ver. 6, and iii. 22); but in the happy times of the Messiah, when the knowledge of God will be universal and perfect, and when all the nations of the earth will again, like one loving family, congregate round one centre, not the temple of an idol, but of the Lord of hosts, the difference of the languages will cease, and as God will be one, so His name will be one (Zech. xiv. 10). Such is the spirit of our narrative; but the form, as we have observed, was borrowed in part from a general and prevailing ancient tradition. It is marked by many of the peculiarities of the early Hebrew style; it does not avoid human expressions in reference to the Deity; God is represented as living on high; He descends from heaven to see the town and the tower; He reflects and soliloquizes; He seems, though without jealousy or envy, to fear the too great approach of mankind to His power, as formerly to His wisdom; He takes a resolution, and executes it. But this simplicity of language, which produces sublime and abstract thoughts in a familiar form, has ceased to appear objectionable to our more discriminating age; it is distinctly separated from the ideas which it embodies, and is but rarely and unsuccessfully used to traduce the Biblical notions.

The linguistic researches of modern times have more and more confirmed the theory of one primitive Asiatic language, gradually developed into the various modifications by external agencies and influences. Formerly, the Hebrew tongue was, by many scholars, advocated as the original idiom; for it was maintained both by early Jewish and Christian authorities, that as the race of Shem were no partners in the impious work of the Tower, they remained in possession of the first language, which the fathers of the earliest age had left to Noah; but this view, like the more recent one, that a child if left alone without human society would speak Hebrew, is now classed among the popular errors. At present, the scale of probability inclines more to the Sanscrit, although the disquisition is far from being concluded or settled. We must, however, warn against an inference which has been drawn in favour of the Babylonian cuneiform language from the circumstance, that those characters are found on the bricks forming the foundation of Birs-Nimroud, the supposed Tower of Babel. That temple, *in its existing ruins and relics*, does not date, at the utmost, earlier than the twelfth century before the present era; and cannot, therefore, in any way be employed in determining the question concerning the one primitive language.

The materials generally used for the construction of Babylonian buildings are here most faithfully described (ver. 3). As in Egypt, the edifices of Mesopotamia consisted of sun-dried, but often also of burnt bricks, baked of the purest clay, and sometimes mixed with chopped straw, which materially enhances their compactness and hardness; these bricks were generally covered with inscriptions, promising to prove of the greatest historical value. But instead of mortar, the Babylonians used as a cement that celebrated asphalt or bitumen, which is nowhere found in such excellence and abundance as in the neighbourhood of Babylon. We refer, for further details, to our notes on Exodus, i. 14, ii. 3, and v. 7. One of the most gifted of the modern explorers declared the ruins of Birs-Nimroud a specimen of the perfection of Babylonian masonry, and remarked, "that the cement by which the bricks were united is of so tenacious a quality, that it is almost impossible to detach one from the mass entire" (*Layard*, Nineveh and Babylon, p. 499).

Nothing but the violence of a fearful conflagration, the ravages of which are

founded the language of all the earth; and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

manifest in the ruins of Birs-Nimroud, would have been able to annihilate a building which appeared to be beyond the destructive power of time.

God is stated to have frustrated the ambitious schemes of men by miraculous interference: it is, therefore, futile to guess whether flashes of lightning converted their speech into an unintelligible stammering, or whether a temporary suspension of the intellectual faculties changed the thought into absurdity. But the words of our text do certainly not imply that God destroyed by lightning the upper part of the building; "He descended" merely to confound the speech of the builders; and it is inadmissible to base the interpretation of this passage on the circumstance, that the higher portions of the temple of Belus present a glazed, fused, or burnt appearance; for this destruction, by whatever agency it might have been worked, did not take place till considerably after the time of Nebuchadnezzar.

VII.—THE GENERATIONS BETWEEN NOAH AND ABRAHAM.

CHAPTER XI. 10—32.

10. These are the generations of Shem: Shem *was* a hundred years old, and begat Arphaxad two years after the flood: 11. And Shem lived after he begat Arphaxad five hundred years, and begat sons and daughters.— 12. And Arphaxad lived thirty-five years, and begat

10—32. The genealogy of Shem, which forms the contents of this section, is the immediate continuation of the table of the Adamites contained in the fifth chapter; and both are parallel in every respect. Both consist of ten generations; and both end with the individual selected to glorify and to propagate his race; the one with Noah, the other with Abram. In both lists nearly the same chronological dates are inserted, and both are therefore equally intended to serve for historical computations. But there is one great difference between both. Whilst the list of the Adamites contains individuals, that of the Shemites enumerates, at least partly, representatives of nations. We know from the preceding chapter, that Arphaxad and Salah, Eber and Peleg, were the founders of tribes; but the difficulty consists in ascertaining where here the *real* individuals begin. It may, perhaps, not be impossible to find nations whose names have some resemblance with Reu and Serug; but it is undoubted that the three last names of our list, Nahor, Terah, and Abram, are intended as individuals; and although the uncertainty concerning Reu and Serug, deprives us of an interesting addition to our knowledge of ancient geography, their connection with Eber proves, at least, to which part of the Shemitic branches they belonged; and if they indeed represent cities or tribes, we must seek them in the neighbourhood of the Euphrates. But the general historical meaning of this genealogy is as certain as it is important.

Salah: 13. And Arphaxad lived after he begat Salah four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters.—14. And Salah lived thirty years, and begat Eber: 15. And Salah lived after he begat Eber four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters. —16. And Eber lived thirty-five years, and begat Peleg: 17. And Eber lived after he begat Peleg four hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters —18. And Peleg lived thirty years, and begat Reu: 19. And Peleg lived after he begat Reu two hundred and nine years, and begat sons and daughters.—20. And Reu lived thirty-two years, and begat Serug: 21. And Reu lived after he

That branch of the Shemites which inhabited Arphaxad or northern Assyria, after having increased and crossed the Euphrates, was divided into several tribes, no doubt on both sides of the river, till the descendants, in the fourth generation, migrated westward to Canaan (see p. 189). Thus the descent and the journeys of Abraham and of his progeny are traced with an accuracy which will guide our judgment regarding the other geographical allusions of this passage. Terah and Abraham are stated to have been born in "*Ur of the Chaldees*"; they intended to exchange their native abodes with those of Canaan; and on their way to this land they stayed in Haran. The identity of the last-mentioned town with *Carrhae* of the classical writers, is undisputed. It was situated on the river Balissus, 20 miles south-east of Edessa, in a country destitute of water and of trees, to which circumstance it may owe its name, which means a "dry or parched place"; surrounded by mountains, though itself built in a large plain. It was the point whence several caravan roads issued, one over Nisibis to the Tigris, another southward to the Euphrates, to Circesium and Babylon; and another south-west to Syria and Palestine. It belonged to the chief towns forced by Sennacherib's predecessors under the Assyrian sceptre; and stood with Tyre in commercial relations naturally favoured by its position; it was, after the time of Alexander the Great, peopled with Macedonians; offered efficient assistance to Pompey, who here stationed a Roman garrison; but became chiefly famous by the death and total defeat which Crassus suffered in its vicinity from the Parthians (B.C. 53); it preserved a faithful attachment to the Romans, who therefore made it the first Roman colony in Mesopotamia, and raised it to the metropolis of the country (165 A.C.); it was further renowned by its oracles, and its mysterious worship devoted to the moon-goddess, and shared by the Roman emperors, Caracalla and Julianus; it became the frontier town of the Byzantine empire, wherefore Justinianus fortified its walls; it is mentioned by Arabic writers as a principal town of Sabaean worshippers, who here possessed an oratory ascribed to Abraham; it was, therefore, by Syrian authors contemptuously called the "heathen town," in contradistinction to the Christian city, Edessa, and asserted to have been the centre from which idolatry spread over the whole earth; it was, in the twelfth century still inhabited by some Jewish families, which stated that their synagogue was built by Ezra, and pointed out the site where the house of Abraham was said to have stood, where no other building was allowed to be constructed, and which the Mohammedans also held in high veneration. But already in the thirteenth century, Haran was

begat Serug two hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters.—22. And Serug lived thirty years, and begat Nahor: 23. And Serug lived after he begat Nahor two hundred years, and begat sons and daughters. —24. And Nahor lived twenty-nine years, and begat Terah: 25. And Nahor lived after he begat Terah a hundred and nineteen years, and begat sons and daughters. —26. And Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

27. Now these are the generations of Terah: Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran begat Lot. 28. And Haran died before his father Terah, in the land

quoted as an extinct town. At present it lies mostly in ruins, though some towers are left, and is still visited by pious pilgrims, as a spot hallowed by its connection with the patriarch Abraham. From the situation of Haran above described, the general position of Ur of the Chaldees cannot be doubtful.

It appears that Ur is rather the name of a province than a town; and that Haran also belonged to it. For when Abraham was living in this town, God said to him: "Go out of thy country and the place of thy birth .... to the land which I shall show thee" (xii. 1).—The reason why Terah resolved to leave his home, is not stated; we may, however, suppose that the increasing population, and, perhaps, the growing numbers of his flocks and herds, induced him to seek richer pasturage and a less occupied soil; he began his journey in the direction towards Canaan, but found already in the important town of Haran the object of his migration realised; here he settled, and stayed for a considerable time; for here his family acquired wealth and numerous servants (xii. 5). The distance from the original dwelling-place of Terah to Haran might, therefore, not have been very great; and this determines sufficiently the position of the district of Ur.

Terah the idolator intended, of his own accord, to leave Mesopotamia, and to settle in Canaan. His son, Abraham, received from God only the same command; and yet his obedience was regarded as the first great proof of his faith (Hebr. xi. 8). But the great difference is this, that whilst Terah's emigration was only the consequence of an *external* necessity or desire, that of Abraham had a *spiritual* or religious motive; so far from suffering want in Haran, Abraham had there risen to a state of flourishing prosperity; that country had, therefore, become to him endeared by all human ties; and God Himself seems with emphasis to have pointed to this happy abode, in addressing him: "go from thy country, and from the place of thy birth, and from thy father's house"; —but Abraham brought the sacrifice without murmuring or reluctance; he felt that the formation of a pure religious centre required the perfect separation from the pagan country, where the bonds of relationship or of patriotism might retard or check the progress of the new doctrines; and he, therefore, disregarded his worldly advantages, and conquered his prepossessions to secure the higher privileges of religion. Terah's wish for emigration was a matter of expediency, and he changed his plans at the first place which promised him the desired benefits; he stayed and died at Haran; but the unaltered end of Abraham's journey was Canaan (xii. 5); and he proceeded thither even during his father's life-time.

Although the usual period of man's life

of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees. 29. And Abram and Nahor took wives to themselves: the name of Abram's wife *was* Sarai; and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah, and the father of Iscah. 30. But Sarai was barren; she *had* no child. 31. And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his son's son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went with each other from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came to Haran, and dwelt there. 32. And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years: and Terah died in Haran.

had, by God, been fixed not to exceed 120 years (vi. 3), the ages in the generations between Shem and Terah are still considerably higher; but they show a decided tendency towards that limit, and indicate that the mighty strength originally granted to the human frame, was rapidly decreasing (see p. 108).

Terah had three sons, Abram, Nahor, and Haran; the third son, Haran, died early in Ur *before* his father; but he left one son, Lot, and two daughters, Milcah and Iscah; Abram married Sarai, his half-sister (xx. 12); and Nahor took for his wife Milcah, his brother Haran's daughter: the matrimonial alliances were, therefore, formed within the same family; a circumstance which will later recur with increased emphasis. Nahor had eight sons by Milcah, and four by a second wife Reumah (xxii. 20—24); but Sarai had no children; this fact, which will form so prominent a part in the succeeding portions, is here significantly anticipated (ver. 30). The present part of our chapter is, therefore, throughout a systematic introduction to the subsequent narrative; it guarantees consistency and unity of design; and fragmentary notices can nowhere be suspected.

II.

THE HISTORY OF THE HEBREW PATRIARCHS.

CHAPTERS XII. TO L.

I.—THE HISTORY OF ABRAHAM AND LOT.

CHAPTERS XII. 1 TO XXV. 11.

CHAPTER XII.

SUMMARY.—On the command of God, and encouraged by the promise of a blessed future, Abraham emigrated, in the seventy-fifth year of his life, from Mesopotamia into Canaan; stayed near Shechem, at the celebrated oak of Moreh; and after having received the Divine assurance that his descendants should possess the land, he built an altar, journeyed to the neighbourhood of Beth-el, where he likewise

erected an altar, and then proceeded southward.—A famine compelled him to journey to Egypt; and fearing the licentiousness of the inhabitants, he represented his wife, Sarai, to be his sister. But when the king took her into his house, he was visited with severe plagues, which made him conscious of his guilt. Abraham, re-united with his wife, left Egypt, enriched by the many and valuable presents.

1. And the Lord said to Abram, Go out of thy country, and from the place of thy birth, and from thy father's

The historian has reached the end of the first chief portion of his narrative; he has completed the introductory section of his grand composition; he has shown the origin of the world through the omnipotence of God, and the descent of the nations of the earth from one common ancestor; he has, by a universal pedigree, disclosed the beautiful hope that, however dispersed and inimical to each other the nations may be, they will, in a happier future, be re-united in brotherhood;—but before the human family reaches this aim, it has to pass through a long and wearisome career: during unnumbered ages the various tribes will continue in hostility and warfare; for unmeasured periods the omnipotent Creator will be forgotten, and darkness will shroud the earth. In one tribe alone the spark of truth will be preserved, and through that tribe "all the families of the earth will be blessed" (xii. 3). In Abraham's race lives the hope of the world. This is the Hebrew writer's avowed principle; and henceforth he devotes his narrative exclusively to the destinies of that race. Abraham's descendants begin to form the centre from which the history of all nations is viewed; they are the heart from which life issues in every direction, and to which life and strength stream back; they are the only cultivated spot in the vast dreariness of mankind; their love is indeed ready to pour forth the waters of life, which convert the wilderness into a garden; they cast the seeds, and teach, and advise; but they remain long alone and solitary, despised and misunderstood, and but too often in a desperate warfare against their own levity and inconstancy. They have to educate *themselves* before they are capable and worthy of commencing their great mission; if the branches shall flourish, the root and the stem must be strengthened beyond the power of the tempests. The law of Moses shows the self-instructing tendency of Israel; whilst the prophets begin the work of universal education, to be continued till all unite in the knowledge of God, and to be completed in "the latter days" (comp. Gal. iii. 8; Acts iii. 25; Rom. iv. 13, 16).

Up to this point our narrative has shown very numerous similarities with the introductory history of most of the ancient nations, though the resemblance of the form is almost everywhere accompanied by a fundamental difference in the spirit; we have hitherto trod on universal ground, though the peculiar impress of the *Hebrew* writer can nowhere be mistaken; every trace of heathen elements is effaced: though almost all nations possess traditions concerning the Creation, a Paradise, and the origin of sin; concerning a deluge, a dispersion, and confusion of languages; the Hebrews alone purified and ennobled them; they used them as appropriate vehicles for important truths and lessons. But here their *national* history begins; every material resemblance, even in the form, ceases, and the Abrahamites pursue their own path; we shall but seldom be able to point out parallels with other nations, from which they are henceforth separated; but we shall the more highly admire their own special development; in faithfully following the progress of our narrative, we shall find that it nowhere deviates from the aim which it proposed to itself, and to which we have alluded; and we shall be led to acknowledge the same comprehensiveness and skill in the history of a family growing into a nation, as were displayed in delineating the advance from the birth of one couple to the population of the earth.

house, into the land that I shall show thee: 2. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

1—9. For Abraham is the type of the Israelites as a nation. In his character and his destinies, their future history is faithfully mirrored. Abraham descended from an idolatrous family, and was born in a land of heathens; and Israel grew into a nation, in a country abounding in all the abominations of superstition. Abraham left a domicile which yielded him every material prosperity, and was dear to him by many social ties; and the Israelites, laden with treasures, quitted a land in which they had long found a hospitable reception, where their external necessities were so well provided for that they frequently remembered it with longing, and where they had formed the most intimate social connections. Abraham followed, by faith, the guidance of God into an unknown land which He would show him; and Israel went, with reliance and devotion, "after God into a desert which is not sown," into a wilderness of sterility and horror. A covenant was concluded with Abraham as with Israel, and both covenants were ratified by a *sign*; both had the power of blessing or curse over others; their friends should prosper, their enemies perish; both received the promise of a numerous progeny, through which the nations of the earth should be blessed, but both saw all earthly probability of a fulfilment disappear; for Abraham was denied a son from his lawful wife, and the Israelites were not only in Egypt diminished by the cruelty of her rulers, but in the desert by famine, war, and pestilence: but at this point the character of Abraham diverges from that of Israel; henceforth the former shines as the model which the latter were unable to imitate; and the history of Abraham becomes the instructor of Israel. For whilst the former exhibited an unshaken courage and faith through all the severest trials, the latter wavered in temptations, and despaired in difficulties; the former believed in a distant promise, the latter did not believe the visible messenger of God, sent to effect their immediate rescue, and even that messenger himself succumbed in moments of despondency: the former entered Canaan, where he could not claim one foot of land, for it was in the hands of hostile tribes, whose valour he saw, and whose cities he visited; but he placed his trust in the love and omnipotence of God, and built an altar at the place where the promise was made to him; the latter trembled at the mere report of the power of Canaan's tribes, gave up all hope of possession, and pusillanimously lamented the credulity which had induced them to rely on extravagant assurances. When famine compelled Abraham to seek shelter in foreign countries, he emigrated with a heart full of confidence, certain that God would lead him back, in due season, for the realization of His promises; whereas a trifling defeat or national misfortune was sufficient to cause Israel meanly to apprehend, that God had abandoned and forgotten them. The life of Abraham was one of piety and religious contemplation; this was the model after which the Israelites had to strive, and which is delineated in their laws, and in their prophecies; Abraham, the peaceful, benevolent, ever-contented emir, is the direct contrast to the conquering, ambitious, and warlike Nimrod. So was the people of Israel intended to distinguish itself from the other nations by its purer life, and its nobler aims. But, as Abraham could exchange the nomad's staff for the hero's sword where right and justice demanded, so should Israel be ready to fight the battles of God, trusting in His invisible aid against the chariots and the horsemen of the oppressing heathens. Obedience was the innermost centre of Abraham's character; it culminated in his readiness to sacrifice that son through whom alone the future glories could be fulfilled; thus should Israel,

3. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.—4. So Abram departed, as the Lord

with an unlimited submission, rely on the Divine promises, even if kings and nations appeared to scheme their inevitable destruction. We shall not here pursue the parallel further; but it is a general historical truth, that the character and pursuits of the nations are reflected in those of their patriarchs and heroes; from this principle, the history of Abraham gains a wider scope and a higher interest; and we are justified in interpreting it from that enlarged point of view. We shall see, in the *prophet* Abraham, the germ of the future *nation of priests*; in the constructor of altars, the builders of the Tabernacle and the Temple; in the worshipper of the Creator of heaven and earth, the future preachers of the universal God of all nations. The struggle of Israel for reaching their ideal, was intense and protracted; it was often necessary to remind them of the "rock from which they were hewn," and to elevate them by the example of their "father Abraham, who was once called out to be blessed and increased"; but the goal was fixed; leaders were not wanting to guide their wandering steps; and the happiness proposed as their reward, encouraged and stimulated.

With the emigration of Abraham from Haran begins also, in the system of the Old Testament, a new epoch in the relation between God and mankind. By the sin in Paradise, man forfeited God's immediate and paternal intercourse; and God, retiring to immeasurable distance above the human perversities, dictated, as a severe judge, the awful curse deemed an equivalent punishment for the enormous transgression. Ten generations lived and toiled under the influence of that fatal judgment; but human nature proved too weak for such rigid standard; sin and crime multiplied on the earth; seduction increased the natural wickedness; and the *justice* of God required a total destruction of the human race. But, as the Creator cannot annihilate, He preserved one family for the renewal of mankind; and as the Framer of man cannot change his nature, He altered the character of His own government. Since man is apt to sin from his youth, God concluded with him, for all eternity, the covenant of *mercy*, and sealed it with a heavenly sign; thenceforth, no more the austere measure of justice, but the indulgence of grace should preside over human actions. However, few generations only passed before it became evident, that the obstinacy of the human mind despises even that gentle guidance of God; that it boastingly exults in its own strength, and believes it to be self-sufficient for its existence and glory: it was, therefore, necessary to leave the refractory spirits to their own heedless forgetfulness; they were not rejected or destroyed—because the mercy of God had promised to be eternal,—but they were severed from the alliance which united them with the Father, no more acknowledged by them. But twenty generations could not have lived in vain; nor could the designs which God had formed with regard to the creatures of His own image, be annulled. He selected, therefore, one family on which He lavished all His love, and with which He entered into a connection, stronger and closer even than that which had bound him to the first human pair; for the alliance between Abraham's family and God was a reciprocal covenant, based on self-conscious duties; it was an alliance not concluded with beings of slumbering intellects, but of awakened minds, matured by the vicissitudes of life, and the reflections enforced by varied experience. While the curse against Adam and the promise of Noah were pronounced to the whole human race; from the time of Abraham, promises and communications were addressed and restricted to one family or one people:—but, as God could not cease to love all His children, He in-

had spoken to him: and Lot went with him. And Abram *was* seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. 5. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's

cluded them distantly and indirectly in the blessings; the obedience of Abraham's race was intended to counteract the disobedience of Adam, and to effect, in the progress of ages, a re-union of all nations to be interrupted or broken no more.

There is scarcely any feature in the history of Abraham which is not intended to illustrate one of the two great objects to which we have alluded: the incidents either point to the future destinies of Israel, or to the advance of religious truth among the heathens; that which has no reference to either, was deemed unimportant, and omitted We have here, therefore, no complete biography of Abraham, which was neither intended, nor would have been in accordance with the spiritual tendency of the Pentatench; it would have caused the introduction of extraneous matter, in no way bearing upon universal theocracy, which was regarded as the final aim of universal history. But the consistency of the facts narrated is so complete, that abruptness or deficiency are utterly excluded; the narrative displays even a certain abundance and copiousness; and the chief ideas are sometimes emphatically repeated under modified forms. The Hebrew historian clearly considered all those facts and incidents as possessing full objective truth; and though we must, in this part also, occasionally admit an analogy with the poetical or idealizing form of ancient historiography, it is just this independent elaboration of the form which constitutes the chief value of the narrative, since it converts barren events into truths and lessons. Abraham is an historical person; but, like almost all Biblical individuals, he represents a religious idea also; and as the former is often necessarily subordinate to the latter, we are not always allowed pedantically to insist upon the external details; as in the narrative itself, so in the interpretation, the spirit must decidedly predominate over the letter.

When Abraham, not by human interests but by a Divine call, and even with an effort to overcome the struggling sympathies of his heart, left the paternal house and his aged father, he was encouraged, not by promises of personal wealth and glory, but of a blessing which would ultimately prove the benediction of the human family. Abraham's emigration was a sacrifice unhesitatingly brought for an end concealed in an indefinite future, and scarcely fully understood by himself. Whilst the address of God was explicit and emphatic in describing the domestic felicity which he was commanded to renounce (ver. 1); it did not point out the least social compensation which he might expect in the strange land (vers. 2, 3). No allusion was made to the possession of Canaan; it was only after he had reached the aim of his long journey, that God for the first time promised it *to his descendants* (ver. 7); whilst Abraham himself, seeing it was in the hands of mighty heathen tribes (ver. 6), could during his life call no part of it his own, and was obliged to secure, by a heavy sum, a resting-place after his death. This was the first deed of Abraham's pious obedience. The assurance of a powerful progeny enjoying the undisputed possession of the whole land, was given to Abraham only when in the midst of wanderings and privations; when it scarcely promised a rational realization.

Although Lot accompanied Abraham into the unknown land (ver. 4), he followed him merely as his protector, just as Sarah and the members of his household were "taken" by him (ver. 5); he was not included in the command of God (ver. 1); nor was his sacrifice comparable with that of Abraham, since his father had died long since in Ur. It is, perhaps, for this purpose of showing the less degree of meritoriousness of Lot's emi-

son, and all their property which they had gathered, and the souls that they had acquired in Haran, and they went out to go into the land of Canaan; and they came

gration, that the notice of Haran's death was inserted in the text, the economy of which scarcely permits the mention of any irrelevant fact. But the journey of Lot was necessary, not only on account of his connection with the awful fate of Sodom and Gomorrah, but on account of the ethnographic relation in which his descendants, the Ammonites and Moabites, stand with Mesopotamia.

The first place in Canaan where Abraham halted with his family and his household, was at *Shechem*, near a celebrated oak-tree. As we might have expected, the first recorded encampment of the patriarch is not without significance. Shechem is situated in the very centre of Palestine; it is in the Bible even called the "navel of the land," and was the natural place of assembly for all the tribes of the country; the oak was, in the time of the Judges, still famous under the name of "oak of sorcerers," and near it was a rich temple of the idol Baal-Berith; but the region in and around Shechem was even at that time still partly occupied by the heathens. Only by remembering these facts, our text will appear in its full and deep meaning. Abraham proceeded at once to the central town of the land intended as the future habitation of his descendants; a town obviously too important by its position to be left in the hands of the enemies; and there that promise of the land was for the first time made (ver. 7). The place of the ancient tree, which so long witnessed superstitious and cruel rites, was hallowed by a Divine vision, and converted into a sacred spot; and at the side of the idolatrous temple rose an altar dedicated to the God of heaven and earth. Thus the facts related obtain a prospective and didactic force for which we have prepared the reader by some of the preceding remarks.—Shechem, perhaps one of the oldest towns of Palestine, and in early times inhabited by the Hivites, is situated in a narrow but beautiful valley, between 1,200 to 1,600 feet wide, seven miles south of Samaria, not far from the confines of the ancient provinces of Ephraim and Manasseh, and in the range of the mountains of Ephraim, at the foot both of Mount Ebal and Gerizim, which enclose it north and south, which were themselves famous by early altars and sanctuaries, and were of the highest religious interest by the blessing and the curse proclaimed on them for the observance or the neglect of the Law. The town was not only important in the history of the patriarchs, but in the theocratical and political history of the Israelites; it was a city of refuge and a Levitical town; here Joshua delivered his last solemn address to all the tribes of Israel; it was, in the time of the Judges, the principal town of Abimelech's kingdom; here Rehoboam was proclaimed king, and promulgated to the delegates of the people his insulting policy; and when the ten tribes declared their independence of his despotic rule, it became the residence of the new empire. It was not unimportant in the time of the captivity, and became after its expiration the celebrated centre of the Samaritan worship, whose temple was only destroyed by John Hyrcanus (B.C. 129). In the first century of the Christian era it lay in ruins; but on its ancient site, or in its immediate vicinity, a new, though smaller town, Neapolis, was built, probably by Flavius Vespasianus; it was the birth-place of Justin Martyr, and the seat of Christian bishops; although captured by the Moslems and the Crusaders, it suffered but little, or temporarily; after several vicissitudes, which could not annihilate its prosperity, it fell finally into the hands of the Turks (1242 A.C.), and the present Nablous, though enclosed by no walls, counting only about 8,000 inhabitants, and containing no more than fifteen to twenty Sama-

into the land of Canaan.—6. And Abram passed through the land to the place of Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. And the Canaanite *was* then in the land. 7. And the

ritan families, "the oldest and the smallest sect," carries on a not inconsiderable commerce, is celebrated for the manufacture of soap, and maintains a spirit of independence against the Egyptian government. Its neighbourhood, highly picturesque by its position, and abundantly watered by fountains, rills, and watercourses, is distinguished by beautiful olive-groves, a blooming vegetation, and a carefully cultivated soil; the delight and the praise of all modern travellers. About two miles east of Shechem lies the little village Abulnita, and here in an enclosure of plastered walls, without roof, the grave of Joshua is believed to be; and at a little distance south-east from there "the well of Jacob" is pointed out, celebrated by an incident in the New Testament. The few Samaritan Jews at present inhabiting Nablous, are marked for "their noble physiognomy and stately appearance." They boast the possession of some very ancient manuscripts and commentaries of the Pentateuch. When, a few years since, Abbé Bargès on the spot enquired about the date of the celebrated scroll shown to him, he received the reply, that "it was copied at the door of the Tabernacle, on the skin of a lamb killed for a peace-offering by Abishua, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, in the thirteenth year after the settlement of the Israelites in Canaan"! They have some other works on the history of the Jews, and ascribe especial authority to a "Book of Joshua," mostly composed in a highly legendary style. But they admit that the race of the priests descending direct from Aaron is extinct since more than 500 years; and the present ecclesiastical chief, Shalmah ben Tobiah, traces his origin to Uzziel, the son of Kohath and grandson of Levi! Inoffensive and peaceful as they are, they were made the objects of civil and religious oppressions, which in 1842 they unsuccessfully attempted to alleviate by an appeal to the government of France. About 50 years since they were forbidden access to Mount Gerizim, on which they centre all their religious emotions and sacred reminiscences; which is hallowed by traditions of millenniums; where are pointed out the still considerable remains of the great Samaritan temple, the ten or twelve stones, the erection of which they ascribe either to Joshua or to the twelve tribes, and the famous rock on which they maintain the ark rested, Abraham tied his son for the sacrifice, and Jacob saw in his dreams the angels and the mystic ladder; where they assert the holy Tabernacle is hidden, and the pontifical robes of the last High-priest before the captivity are deposited in a cave, together with the treasures of their temple, which in the time of Pontius Pilate (36 A.C.) became the cause of a great carnage and of the deposition of that governor. Before the prohibitory decree was issued, they offered on the mountain their sacrifices, and observed the other rites of their worship; the paschal lamb especially was killed with great solemnity, and on the seventh day of Passover an imposing service was there performed: at present the altar and the sanctuary are a heap of stones, the ambush of reptiles and wild beasts; and the paschal sacrifice is the only one they now offer, but they kill it in the town itself. Their little synagogue, which contains their literary treasures, is situated at the foot of the mountain. The heights of Gerizim command a magnificent view in the four directions, to the valley of the Jordan and the waves of the Mediterranean, to the mountains of Judah and of Galilee: a circumstance which contributed not a little to render the mountain dear and important to the Israelites.—Nablous shows still the portal of its ancient cathedral; and many fragments of marbles, columns, and other remains bespeak the threefold dominion successively exercised by the He-

Lord appeared to Abram, and said, To thy seed shall I give this land. And he built there an altar to the Lord who appeared to him.—8. And he removed from thence to the mountain in the east of Beth-el, and pitched

brews, the Romans, and Mohammedans. Christianity is at present there represented by about 120 taxable individuals; and by a school recently established by the Church Missionary Society.

The great age which oak-trees attain makes them appropriate mediums for the description of localities, especially in districts which offer few other peculiarities; and the more so, as oaks are by no means frequent in Palestine except in hilly regions; they were generally designated after the name of the individual on whose property they stood; and thus we read of the "oak of Tabor," and in our passage of the "oak of Moreh," which is elsewhere also called "the oak which is in Shechem," or, as we have above observed, "the oak of sorcerers." But though the neighbourhood of Shechem might have boasted of one majestic oak of peculiar grandeur and celebrity, it possessed many specimens of the kind, and we read of the "oaks or grove of Moreh"; as in the vicinity of Hebron were the "oaks of Mamre." The high antiquity of the trees was alone sufficient to endow them, in the eyes of the Orientals, with a considerable degree of sanctity; they were distinguished by appellative names; and in the time of Josephus there was near Hebron a terebinth which was believed to date back to the creation of the world. It is therefore natural that they should have been selected for solemn purposes; great national meetings were held near them; the dead were buried under their branches; prophets pronounced here their advice and their exhortations; temples and altars were erected, and incense and sacrifices offered, under their mysterious shade; and the hymns, which celebrated the deities, not seldom included the praise of the refreshing places of their worship; reasons enough why the "oak of Moreh" should be the spot for Abraham's first altar, as it was the place where Joshua erected the sacred monument intended for ever to remind the Israelites of their pledges of obedience and piety. The oak forests of the mountains of Bashan were particularly celebrated; they furnished the materials for the rudders of the Tyrians, and the idols of the Canaanites. At present also those elevated parts, more than the other districts, are distinguished by noble oaks, "scattered like orchards upon the hills, much like the olive-trees on the west of the Jordan"; though even there the finest species (Quercus robur) does not appear, and the trees seldom attain the imposing dimensions which sometimes astonish us in our northern forests. They occur, however, in various other species, in the slopes of the Lebanon, near the sources of the Jordan, and along its eastern side so far south as the territory of the ancient Ammonites; their leaves, often broader than those of our oaks, afford a grateful shade, and their branches are frequently used for the construction of the flat roofs of houses. On the hills of southern Judæa, about Hebron, they are seen in great quantities, although they have here more the appearance of shrubs than of trees; but they are finer the more we proceed northward, between Samaria and Mount Carmel, on the banks of the Kishon, on Mount Tabor and its valleys, and beyond the plain of Acre.

From Shechem, Abraham proceeded towards Bethel, situated in the direct thoroughfare of Palestine. The text does not allude to the cause which induced or compelled him to resume his wanderings; but it is evident, from the aim and purport of this portion of Genesis, that Abraham is here designedly described as migrating through the land without finding a permanent or convenient resting-place. He had cheerfully left the rich pastures and the

his tent, *having* Beth-el in the west, and Hai in the east: and there he built an altar to the Lord, and invoked the name of the Lord. 9. And Abram journeyed farther and farther toward the south.

domestic comforts of Haran to be a stranger in a distant land, satisfied by building altars on his journeys, to leave the traces of his piety as marks and admonitions for his descendants. These anticipations are, with regard to Bethel, even more distinct than with reference to Shechem; and they must be considered the more decisive, as Jacob also experienced here occurrences of the most extraordinary nature. In the period of the Judges, the Ark and the holy Tabernacle were, for a time, in Bethel; and Samuel chose it as one of the towns which he annually visited for the decision of litigations. But the sacred character which Bethel thus gained was, in the time of the Kings, converted into a perfect abomination; for Jeroboam made it the centre of the idolatrous worship of Apis, introduced by him, in opposition to that of the temple of Jerusalem; his successors preserved his arrangements; and it was only in the time of Josiah that the town was purified from its pagan rites. The consequence of that perversion was a vehement abhorrence against Bethel on the part of the earlier prophets; and "the house of God" was called "the house of iniquity." The altar which Abraham here erected, and the prayers which he here offered up to God, are a rebuke and a reproach for the heedless iniquity which so long prevailed in Bethel.—The original name of the town Bethel was, however, Luz; the former appellation was introduced by Jacob after the extraordinary dream which there occurred to him; but, as Luz and Bethel were later distinguished as two different localities, we must suppose that the sanctuary of Luz, perhaps surrounded by other buildings, stood on a hill in its vicinity; this was the holy place, and was called Bethel ("the house of God"); the latter name was gradually attributed to the town also; though both were inaccurate or geographical descriptions, separated from each other. This explanation is not only borne out, but required, by the various passages in which both names occur. The place "between Bethel in the west, and Hai in the east" may be that very elevation near Luz which was properly called Bethel.—In the time of Joshua, Bethel was a royal town of the Canaanites; it was, however, conquered and fixed as the frontier town between Benjamin and Ephraim; although it was, by Joshua, assigned to the former, it was, in the period of the divided empire, in possession of the latter tribe, which perpetrated the desecration of the holy place to which we have alluded. But after the captivity, it belonged to Benjamin; in the time of the Maccabees, it was fortified by the Syrian king; and was conquered by Vespasian, in the Roman war. Since that time it is seldom mentioned, and but very recently traces of its existence have been ascertained in the little place *Beitin*, in the mountain of Ephraim, between the heads of two shallow brooks, twelve Roman miles from Jerusalem; the greater part of the considerable ruins are on the top of a low hill, which is in accordance with the supposition above ventured; and the massive fragments of walls, of a large square tower, of a very extensive water reservoir, and of several churches, indicate its existence and importance down to the middle ages.

Hai, likewise a royal town of the Canaanites, in the east of Bethel (ver. 8), was among the first towns which Joshua took and destroyed; but later it was rebuilt, and was, after the exile, inhabited by the Benjamites. The ruins which were, already in Jerome's time, inconsiderable, are, by Robinson, believed still to exist south of Deir Diwan, one hour of Beitin or Bethel.

10—20. Abraham continued his aim-

10. And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine *was* severe in the land. 11. And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said to Sarai his wife, Behold, I pray, I know that thou *art* a woman beautiful in appearance: 12. Therefore it will come to pass, when the Egyptians will see thee, that they will say, This *is* his wife: and they will kill me, but they

less wanderings. From Bethel he migrated southwards, a distant and protracted journey; but so far from finding there a permanent abode, he was, by an extraordinary calamity, compelled to proceed even beyond the boundaries of the land. As if to try his resignation, and to prove to him that the territory just promised to his seed was, more than neighbouring countries, subject to the curse which human sin had brought over the earth, God sent a famine, which left him no other alternative but to seek refuge in a kingdom whose licentiousness was too well known, and whose aversion to strangers foreboded to him no benevolent reception. But here it appeared that even Abraham, if left to his own determination, was liable to great mistakes and aberrations. For the first time, God did not guide and advise him, and he heaped upon himself the guilt of desponding doubt, of mental reserve, if not untruth, and of a fatal want of moral courage, which threatened to contaminate the purity of his conjugal relations, and for ever to blight his domestic happiness. His conduct was exemplary wherever the path was clear, or wherever it was prescribed to him; all his greatness consisted in his *obedience*; it was the tendency of this narrative to show, that where he was beset by difficulties without being aided by the immediate guidance of God, he was subject to the common errors of humanity; and that, as the eternal standard of virtue and moral action—the Law, was not yet revealed, the personal direction of God was necessary in every individual instance. We see such assistance, indeed, invariably extended to His favourites down to Moses; after this time he sent prophets, not to give new precepts, but to enforce those proclaimed before, deemed all-sufficient if correctly understood, and affording Divine advice for every complication of life. It would, therefore, be a perfect mistake to attempt a reconciliation of Abraham's conduct in Egypt with the precepts of morality not yet known to him. Just as he saw no crime in marrying his sister, the daughter of the same father, so he was not aware of the sinfulness of the expedients in which his despondency took refuge with regard to his wife. The education of Israel was not finished with Abraham; he was indeed the unapproached model of submission to the Divine will; but later that will was more clearly and more comprehensively expressed in a code of laws comprising all the relations of human existence; the Israelites were exhorted to obey those systematic precepts as readily and heartily as Abraham followed the occasional commands with which God favoured him; but we cannot expect him to act with faultless perfection when those commands ceased, and he was merely the son of Terah. Careful regard to this principle precludes many errors in the interpretation of Abraham's history, and that of the other patriarchs.

The same occurrence which forms the contents of the second part of this chapter, is related with inconsiderable modifications, on two other occasions (chap. xx. and xxvi.). In all these three cases the beauty of the wife, and the reputed lasciviousness of the heathens, rendered it advisable to represent her as the sister; she was in the two former instances conducted into the house or harem of the pagan

will let thee live. 13. Say, I pray thee, thou *art* my sister; that it may be well with me for thy sake; and my soul may live because of thee.—14. And it came to pass, that, when Abram was come into Egypt, the Egyptians beheld the woman that she *was* very beautiful. 15. And the princes of Pharaoh saw her, and praised her before Pharaoh: and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house. 16. And he treated Abram well for her sake; and he had

kings, and was, in the third, exposed to the danger of falling a victim to the general immorality; but, by Divine interference, she escaped the pollution, and the event, so far from inflicting injury or ignominy upon the patriarchs, invariably ended in a vast accession to their wealth, and redounded to their glorification. This being the close analogy between the three narratives, we are justified in illustrating them by each other; and especially to conclude, that, in our instance also, Sarah left the house of the Egyptian monarch undefiled; the nineteenth verse must, therefore, either be translated as in the English version: "Why didst thou say, She is my sister? so *I might have taken her* to me to wife," or if we render the last words: "*I took her* to me to wife," we must qualify them by the remark: "but he did not approach her" (xx. 4); for our narrative is, in general, briefer than that of the twentieth chapter; it omits further to state the manner in which the king learnt the conjugal connection between Abraham and Sarah, whilst later it was revealed to him by a vision in a dream (xx. 3). The providential protection of Sarah's purity is, in fact, the very centre of the threefold tale, a repetition which would scarcely be explicable for a less important purpose. The sanctity of matrimony, that corner-stone of the whole social fabric, was intended to form a prominent and noble characteristic of the Hebrew community; it pervades, as a great principle, the whole of the Old Testament; it is in its full depth involved in the account of the creation of woman, and in the attributes which are there given to the wife; next to the reverence due to human life, it forms the most important of the duties embodied in the Decalogue; it is, in the Mosaic legislation, enjoined with a force and an emphasis proving that it was regarded as a primary and fundamental obligation; the dire consequences of its violation are, in the historical books, unfolded in grand and awful pictures of misery, of which the overwhelming calamities of David, after his crime against Uriah, are among the most striking instances; and when the prophets saw with sorrow that their admonitions were fruitless, they foretold in anger Israel's irrevocable annihilation. It is the end of our narrative to prove that God watches with care over conjugal alliances, and that He visits their desecration with disastrous punishments; the plagues inflicted on the king are a warning and an exhortation; and the indulgence extended to Abraham for his culpable abandonment of his wife, is no less an act of Divine mercy, than the intact preservation of Sarah amidst her imminent dangers.

Considering this high tendency of our section, it would be futile indeed to insist upon some formal objections to which it is open, as, for instance, that Sarah, who was at the time of these events between sixty-five and ninety years, who had even called herself old, and had ceased to be "after the manner of women" (xviii. 11, 13), should still have possessed such rare beauty as to be desired for a wife by voluptuous kings; or that the same incident should happen three times almost in the same manner; or that Abraham was not sufficiently warned by the first occurrence to avoid the same imprudence a second time. These and similar difficulties, urged

sheep, and oxen, and he-asses, and men-servants, and maid-servants, and she-asses, and camels. 17. And the Lord plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues on account of Sarai, Abram's wife. 18. And Pharaoh called Abram, and said, What *is* this *that* thou hast done to me? Why didst thou not tell me that she *was* thy

with a triumphant confidence by those who deny to the Bible every higher value, occurred to the mind of the Hebrew writer as little as the discrepancies obvious in the history of the Creation and the Deluge; nor did he think of such things as "the brighter Asiatic complexion of Sarah," which attracted the notice of the Egyptians; or her "barrenness," which had preserved her beauty; or other ingenious devices of a similar kind. In his hands, the facts are subordinated to ideas; he is as little an ordinary historian or biographer as he can be expected to be a geologist or an astronomer; the material world is made subservient to his religious doctrines, and the actual events are employed to illustrate his notions concerning the Divine government of the world. We cannot too often enforce this principle, which alone permits an intelligent penetration into the text, unbiassed and undisturbed by considerations which were never intended by the Hebrew writer as essential or independent points of his composition.

Although Canaan, if cultivated with some care, yields abundant harvests, it is not exempted from sterility; the history of Israel records more than one instance of distressing famine; and the anticipation of failing crops is, by some antiquarians, assigned even as one of the reasons for the institution of periodical Sabbath-years, which compelled the Israelites to lay up stores of corn during six successive years, sufficient to shield them against the most pressing emergencies. Scanty harvests were threatened in the Pentateuch as the punishment for national impiety; just as a plentiful produce was deemed the result of the Divine blessing attending righteousness. We may thus understand how prophets could speak of an "ignominy of famine," to be removed as soon as the land is cleared from its idolatrous impurities. Now Canaan was, within a brief period, visited by several successive and fearful famines, which the text does not fail to mention and to describe as important incidents in the history of the patriarchs. This circumstance cannot, therefore, be insignificant. And, indeed, the Divine scourges happening so immediately after Abraham had received the promise of the land, were the first sign of the realization of this assurance; for they showed that the time was approaching when "the measure of the sin of the Amorites would be full," and when "the land would vomit out its wicked inhabitants." The close connection into which the Providence of God brings the deeds of man with his destinies and those of his land, proved to Abraham the inevitable ruin of the Canaanites, whilst he himself should experience the truth that the pious do not suffer with the wicked, but that "they are not ashamed in the time of evil, and in the days of famine they are satisfied"; for Abraham grew richer in every kind of valuable property. But in such public calamities Egypt was the usual, though not the only refuge of the inhabitants of Palestine; the fertility of that country, guaranteed by the almost regular inundations of the beneficent Nile, and secured by a complicated net-work of canals and trenches for the purposes of irrigation, was proverbial in antiquity, and though not entirely exempt from the possibility of failing crops, it afforded, in times of want, succour and help even to distant nations: into which subject a later portion of this book will oblige us more fully to enter.—Now the famine which befell

wife? 19. Why didst thou, say, She *is* my sister? so I might have taken her to me to wife: and now behold thy wife; take *her*, and go thy way. 20. And Pharaoh gave men commands concerning him: and they sent him away, and his wife, and all that he had.

Canaan in the time of Abraham, and which is designedly characterised as *heavy* or severe, compelled him to seek relief in the same land; but the text is careful in describing this emigration only as "a temporary sojourn," not as an intended settlement; however inviting the abundance of Egypt might have been to the rich nomad chief, it did not tempt him to despise, or permanently to leave the less favoured land of promise; although Canaan was granted only to his descendants, he felt himself intimately bound to it; for he lived more in the future than in the present; he viewed himself as the first link of a great chain; he was the root which could not be torn from the soil in which the branches were designed to flourish. Nor did the better part of his descendants ever divest themselves of this feeling. Although for four centuries transplanted into Egypt, they always regarded themselves as strangers; they said likewise that they only "sojourned" in that land, and did not rest till their desire of returning to Canaan was satisfied. Thus we have another analogy between Abraham and Israel.

CHAPTER XIII.

SUMMARY.—Abraham returned to the place near Bethel, where he had before offered up his prayers and built an altar. His own flocks, and those of Lot, had, in the mean time, become so numerous, that they could not be maintained at the same place. Abraham, therefore, in order to avoid contentions, asked Lot to choose whatever part of the land he most preferred; he would himself settle in the opposite direction. Lot selected the blooming districts of the Jordan, down to Sodom, whose inhabitants were sunk in immorality. God appeared to Abraham, promised him a numberless progeny, and to the latter the possession of the whole land. — The patriarch pitched his tent in the oak-groves of Mamre, near Hebron, and built there an altar.

1. And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the south *of Canaan*. 2. And Abram *was* very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold. 3. And on his journeys from the south he

1—4. Not longer than urgent necessity required and compelled, did Abraham remain in the land destined to become of a deep but melancholy interest to his descendants. He was, like them, led into that country by a famine; both were there injured in their most sacred rights, though from different reasons; and in both cases was the monarch, by the supernatural plagues he suffered, compelled to accelerate rather than to retard their departure. Like the Israelites, Abraham left Egypt not only enriched with herds and flocks, the usual property of the Bedouin, but with "silver and gold," as the text distinctly remarks (ver. 2; xii. 16); it is undoubted that this species of wealth is intended to describe a higher social scale to which the patriarch had risen, and which significantly points to a future more settled state, when the bare necessities of life would be adorned by comforts and cheered by embellishments. With his regained wife and with Lot, who, as his

went to Beth-el, to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Beth-el and Hai; 4. To the place of the altar which he had made there at the first: and there Abram invoked the name of the Lord.—5. And Lot also, who went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents. 6. And the land did not bear them, that they might dwell together: for their property was great, so that they could not dwell together. 7. And there was a strife between the herdsmen of Abram's cattle and the herdsmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelt then in the land. 8. And Abram said to Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen; for we *are* kinsmen. 9. *Is* not the whole land before thee?

younger relative, had accompanied him on his journeys, he proceeded to the south of Canaan. But his migrations were no longer so entirely erratic as they had hitherto been. The land was no more a vast tract, equally indifferent to him in all parts; it possessed some spots dear and sacred to his pious heart; and when, by the assistance of God, he had escaped the double danger of famine and disgrace, he advanced in regular and fixed journeys to that place near the town Bethel where he had before erected the altar; and here offered up thanksgivings to his almighty Protector. It is evident from the tenour of the text, that Abraham's premeditated aim was the service which he intended to solemnize; and the words: "he invoked the name of the Lord," imply a more profound devotion than an ordinary prayer; they are hence used only on certain prominent occasions, and tend here to prove that Abraham returned from the land of multifarious idolatry, in which his progeny lost and forgot the true faith, as a pure and believing servant of the Creator.

5—13. Lot was, on Abraham's account, "with whom he went," likewise blessed with wealth; the herds of both were so numerous, that the same district did not afford sufficient pasture, especially as "the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelt also in the land" (ver.7), and naturally occupied the better and greater part of the available soil. The contentions which thus arose between the herdsmen of both were abhorred by the peaceful patriarch, the more so as they threatened to sow enmity between him and his near kinsman; a separation was necessary; and with a disinterestedness which, next to his resigning obedience, was his brightest characteristic, he allowed to his younger and therefore subordinate relative unlimited choice with regard to his future abode. Lot did not delay to avail himself of this liberty; he selected that part of the land which he considered as by far the most blooming and fertile, the district of the Jordan, which at that time was teeming with luxurious vegetation, comparable only with the delightful Paradise, the garden of God, or with the famous corn-fields of Egypt, the envy of ancient nations; he occupied "the whole district of the Jordan," and spread his tents so far southward as Sodom, regardless of the dangerous contact into which he was thus brought with a people "wicked and sinful before the Lord exceedingly" (ver. 13). It is unnecessary to point out with greater distinctness the contrast between the conduct of Abraham and Lot. — The Canaanites and the Perizzites

Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if *thou wilt take* the left hand, then I shall go to the right; or if *thou depart* to the right hand, then I shall go to the left. 10. And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the district of the Jordan, that it *was* all well watered, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, towards Zoar. 11. And Lot chose for himself the district of the Jordan; and Lot journeyed in the east: and they separated themselves the one from the other. 12. Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelt in the cities of the district, and pitched his tents as far as Sodom. 13. But the men of Sodom *were* wicked, and sinners before the Lord exceedingly.—14. And the Lord said to Abram, after Lot was

are here, and in some other passages, synonymous with all the inhabitants of Canaan. Now the etymology of the word Perizzite proves, that they were the inhabitants of *open towns and villages*; it is clearly explained by the prophet Ezekiel, to denote the population of places "without walls and bars and gates"; and it is, in the book of Esther, similarly used for the unfenced cities, in contradistinction to the metropolis, or royal residence. The two names of the Canaanites and the Perizzites, if so coupled, designate, therefore, both the inhabitants of the walled towns and of the open country; and describe, with a certain emphasis, the two chief portions of the population: which is peculiarly appropriate in our passage, where the narrowness of the land is urged.—Hence it is explicable that we find Perizzites mentioned in almost every part of Canaan, as inhabiting the mountains, and the forest plains; in Judah and Ephraim; near Bethel and near Shechem.

14—18. By the departure of Lot, the land was divided into two parts; the district of the Jordan was separated from the rest of Canaan, and formed a distinct territory. Henceforth, the history of the former was unconnected with that of the latter, except by a tie of relationship soon to be severed by the guilt of Lot's immediate offspring, when the very existence of that district was blotted out. Our narrative tends to this point with a steady progress. It was already alluded to in the express remark regarding the extreme impiety of the inhabitants; and it is more decidedly approached by the following renewed promise made to Abraham. The latter was now the *only* Hebrew in the land Canaan, properly so called; and to his descendants alone it was now again guaranteed. The family of Lot could not remain so closely associated with the house of Abraham without seriously endangering its development; the separation of both removed a difficulty which had clouded the future prospects of Abraham's seed; and it was, therefore, important, that these prospects should now be clearly repeated. But they are not only renewed, but expanded and enlarged. Abraham was invited to look around in all directions; the *whole* land was to belong to his seed; it was to be their inheritance "for ever"; and that seed was to be endless, "like the dust of the earth which no man can number." So much grander and more comprehensive was this pledge than the first simple promise: "To thy seed will I give this land" (xii. 7). Eternity and infinitude were granted, notions that lie above the stretch of human capacity; hopes that

separated from him, Lift up now thy eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: 15. For all the land which thou seest, to thee shall I give it, and to thy seed for ever. 16. And I shall make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, *then*

reach beyond a natural realisation. The new promise was, therefore, intended as a prophecy; and if we look upon the fulfilment, we must acknowledge in it the same ideal yearnings, which form the genial sun-beams of the Old Testament; the seed of Abraham comprises not merely his bodily descendants, but all the heirs of that faith, which it was hoped would in time embrace the universe, not to cease in all eternity.—Abraham was further commanded, confidently to pass through the land in its length and its breadth; and wherever he set his foot, the territory was marked as his possession. The migrations of the patriarch are, therefore, not indifferent or unimportant; they hallow the soil and determine the boundaries of the future empire; they are deeds both to guide and to encourage his progeny. Hence, even his journey to Egypt must have an importance from this point of view also; it foreshadows the future extent of the Hebrew land down "to the river of Egypt," as indeed the Euphrates, from which Abraham's wanderings began, was named as the utmost eastern limit of the promised empire.

From Bethel, Abraham travelled southward till he pitched his tents in the oak-grove of Mamre, at Hebron, situated in a cool and elevated region, and commanding a fertile valley; about twenty-two Roman miles south of Jerusalem, and belonging to the later territory of Judah. Hebron was one of the oldest towns of Palestine; it was built seven years before Tanis in Egypt; and was early the residence of a heathen king. However, it was, by Joshua, appointed as one of the cities of refuge, and assigned to the Levites; it thus assumed the character of a holy town where vows were taken and performed; and David chose it as his abode when he was king of Judah, during seven years and a half. These circumstances suffice to explain the interest evinced for Hebron in the history of the patriarchs; Abraham resided here when the angels made him the happy announcement of the birth of a son; here he acquired the first territorial property in Canaan; and here was the burial-place of himself, of Isaac, and of Jacob, of Sarah, Rebekah, and Leah. The town was, therefore, appropriately distinguished by the erection of an altar (ver. 18). Later, it was fortified by Rehoboam among many other cities; it is still mentioned after the exile; it then belonged to the Idumeans, who were, however, expelled from it by Judas Maccabæus; in the Roman war, it was captured and burnt by the enemies, without, however, being destroyed. In the period of the Crusades, after having, for a time, suffered from heavy attacks, it was made the seat of the bishopric of St. Abraham (in 1167), but returned already in 1187 into the possession of the Moslems, who have ever since retained it, though it was several times assailed and plundered by rebellious pashas or lawless chiefs. In the fifteenth century, it was distinguished by a magnificent hospital and general charity for the distribution of bread and other necessaries to strangers. The present Hebron is a large village rather than a town; it counts among its inhabitants about a hundred Jewish families, living together in a separate quarter; as, in fact, Jews, though often ill-treated, oppressed, and insulted, seem always to have lived in the town, with few interruptions; but it is not unimportant in its commerce; though it is chiefly celebrated for its glass-works, which form

thy seed shall also be numbered. 17. Arise, pass through the land in its length and in its breadth; for to thee I shall give it. 18. And Abram pitched his tents, and came and dwelt in the oak-grove of Mamre, which *is* at Hebron, and built there an altar to the Lord.

the principal articles of export. It is surrounded by elevations, containing the highest peaks in the range of the mountains of Judah. Its blooming vicinity, with its vine-yards and orchards, its wells, its rich pastures and numerous flocks and herds, is one of the proofs, that the care of the agriculturist may still convert Palestine's desolation into smiling prosperity. The tombs of the patriarchs and of their wives, situated at the eastern end of Hebron on the slope of a ravine, attracted continually the visits of travellers; over the cave of Machpelah, called Al Magr by the Arabians, and surrounded by a high and strong wall, a mosque was erected which the Moslems regard as one of the four holiest sanctuaries of the world, from which Christians are excluded, and which stratagem only has enabled a few Europeans to enter. The town itself was, from that structure, called the Castle of Abraham, and received, therefore, from the Mohammedans the name of *Bet El-Khalil*, that is, the House of the "Friend of God," which is the honorary title given to Abraham by the Arabians. The cave itself is, at present, no more permitted to be seen, except so far as the light of the lamp allows, which is suspended in a small opening on the top; though it was, in the twelfth century, still accessible to Jews; and Benjamin of Tudela found here tubs filled with the bones of his co-religionists. The mosque contains, in imitation of the sarcophagi below, six coffins with pyramidal tops, each of them surrounded by small structures, with a window on each side, and folding-doors in front. It is jealously watched by the Moslems.

CHAPTER XIV.

SUMMARY.—Four eastern kings invaded the land of Palestine, in order to exact tribute from the five monarchs of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zoar, and of the Zeboiim. They marched victoriously along the eastern districts of the Jordan, defeating the Rephaim, Zuzim, and Emim; passed round the Dead Sea, subduing the Horites and Edomites, as far as the borders of the desert of Shur or Dshofar; returned southward, and beat the Amalekites and the Amorites in Hazezon-Tamar (vers. 1—7). The five monarchs met them in the valley of Siddim, or the Salt Sea; but they were entirely defeated; and all, except those who escaped into the mountain, were carried away by the conquerors, with the rest of the population and their wealth. When Abraham heard that Lot also was among the captives, he went out with his three hundred and eighteen slaves, assisted by Mamre, and his brothers Eshcol and Aner, reached the enemies at Dan, attacked them, put them to flight, and pursued them to Hobah, in the north of Damascus. When he returned with all the men and the booty, he was met in the north of Jerusalem, in the valley of Shaveh, by the king of Sodom, and by Melchizedek, at once king and high-priest of Salem, serving the God of heaven and earth. He blessed Abraham, who, receiving the benediction with submission, gave him the tenth part of the property. But the patriarch declined for himself every share in the spoil, only reserving the rights of his allies, and asking to be indemnified for the provision which his men had consumed (vers. 8—24).

1. And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king

1—11. The calm narrative of Abraham's personal and domestic affairs is here interrupted by a grand political event, in which kings stand arrayed against kings;

of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations; 2. *That these* made war with Bera king of Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, and Shemeber king of

the voice of prophecy is drowned in the clatter of arms; the hopes are forgotten in the threatening dangers; and, for a moment, the spiritual hue which hovers over the pages of the narrative, seems to be overshadowed by the dark clouds which envelope the destructive thunderbolt, or hide the fierce god of battles. It is impossible to read the history of this war of "four kings against five," without feeling a different atmosphere, a strange scene, a foreign spirit. The world with its strife and ambition, its selfishness and conflicting interests, is substituted for the mind with its noble aspirations, and its distant longings; and man leads instead of following, acts instead of resigning. Let us, with a quick step, pursue the rapid course of events which the text unfolds with a steady hand. An eastern conqueror, Chedorlaomer, the king of Elam, had subdued the important district along the valley of the Jordan, which secures the connection between the Euphrates and the Nile, which guarantees the commerce between the Mediterranean Sea and Arabia, and between Arabia and eastern Asia, which forms the military road leading to the west and the south, and which extends the empires of the Euphrates and Tigris beyond the trackless Arabian Desert down to the wealthy provinces of the Arabian Gulf. At that time, there existed in the valley five chief towns (Pentapolis) which, by their power and position, commanded almost exclusively all those important advantages. They had been made tributary by the king of Elam; during twelve years they bore the yoke; in the thirteenth they revolted; and, in the fourteenth, their mighty oppressor, supported by three powerful kings, marched out with a vast army, to chastize their disobedience, and to renew their fetters. The progress of the united hosts was one of irresistible violence; they curbed and enslaved all the tribes they encountered. From the banks of the Euphrates, they proceeded on the great military road, south-westward; but, in order not to retard their progress by a long siege, they passed at once to the south of Damascus, no doubt reserving their attack upon the fortified town till after their return (ver. 15). They marched as conquerors through the territory of those formidable giants, the Rephaim, and took their principal town, Ashteroth Karnaim, in the district of Bashan; they swept along southward through the land of the Amorites, where they defeated the fearful Zuzim in Ham; they crossed the Arnon, and continued their ravages and destructions in the province of the Moabites, where the Emim, "the terrible people," succumbed to their arms in Shaveh Kiriathaim; but, as if certain of their prey, they did not at once attack the five cities against which their expedition had originally been undertaken; they passed proudly beyond it, despising the advantages which a sudden assault would have afforded them; they advanced into the abodes of the Idumeans; they attacked and defeated the ancient Horites in their strong mountain-fastnesses of the range of Seir; they ventured, in presumptuous boldness, westward even to the very border of the dreary wilderness which separates Arabia from Egypt, and carried desolation so far as the oasis of Paran. But now they remembered the real object of their long campaign; they returned to terrify the cities of the Jordan, not, however, without on their way subduing and crushing mighty nations; they reached the frontiers of Idumea, and conquered Kadesh; they invaded the land of the Amalekites, and subjected it in its whole extent; they defeated the mighty Amorites, and advanced to their important town, Engedi, or Hazezon-Tamar; and thus, from the south-west, approached the region

Zeboiim, and the king of Bela, that *is* Zoar. 3. All these joined in the vale of Siddim, that *is* the Salt Sea. 4. Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled. 5. And in the fourteenth

of the Dead Sea (ver. 7). The kings of the five towns saw with consternation the advance of their powerful adversaries; the wanton expedition of the latter far to the south, had, indeed, allowed them more time for their armament and the maturing of strategic plans; they went out to encounter the enemy with a strong army; they offered them battle in a valley, in the dangerous bitumen-pits of which they hoped to ensnare the strangers;—but they were overpowered by the number and the valour of the inimical hosts; they suffered a fearful defeat; a part perished in those very pits which they had hoped would be fatal to their enemies, and a part, in irregular flight, sought the eastern mountains. All the wealth of the five towns, their provisions, their men and their women, fell into the hands of the East-Asiatic conquerors, who commenced their triumphant return in a north-eastern direction.

This is the general picture which the text offers regarding the impetuous expedition, and in which no trait is wanting, as none is superfluous.—We shall now consider the instructive statements in detail.

The principal king interested in the war of conquest was *Chedorlaomer*, the ruler of Elam; it was his sceptre to which the Pentapolis of the Dead Sea had been submitted, and under which he intended again to force it; the other three kings were, therefore, only his confederates; and in the history of the expedition itself, his name occupies the first place. The territory of Elymais, over which he ruled, is sufficiently known (see p. 189); but the opinions concerning his person are merely conjectural.

The allies of the mighty king of Elymais, who at this period had extended the boundaries of his empire as far as Canaan, were:—1. *Amraphel, king of Shinar*; about whose dominion we must be contented to know that he governed in the southern part of Mesopotamia, in the Babylonian provinces (see p. 178).—2. *Arioch, king of Ellasar.* The identity of this latter locality has always been the subject of the most conflicting conjectures. The recent study of Assyrian inscriptions has, however, led to the decipherment of a name *Larsa*, or Larcha, supposed to be the Ellasar of our chapter. Josephus introduces here the Assyrians; and we see no improbability in this opinion: for as the king of Elymais was able to carry his arms westward beyond the territory of Shinar, or southern Mesopotamia; he seems to have been unmolested by his northern neighbours; the more so as our text supposes a friendly relation between the kings of Central Asia. In Daniel (ii. 14) Arioch occurs as the name of a high Babylonian official, which seems to prove, what is indeed clear from our context, that in fixing the situation of Ellasar, we are scarcely permitted to go beyond the districts of the Euphrates and Tigris (comp. Judith i. 6).—3 *Tidal, king of nations*, the third ally, was no doubt the ruler over several smaller districts or tribes, so gradually subjugated, that it was impossible to describe him briefly with any degree of accuracy.

These four kings undertook an aggressive campaign against the five principal towns of the district of the Jordan, among which Sodom seems to have occupied the first rank. The Sodomites were the richest, as they were the most wicked, of the inhabitants; and the prosperity which had caused their moral ruin, was now on the point of effecting their political destruction. The mission assigned to the Hebrew patriarch with regard to that part of Canaan's population will soon become manifest.

The allied kings defeated:—1. *The*

year came Chedorlaomer, and the kings that *were* with him, and smote the Rephaim in Ashteroth Karnaim, and the Zuzim in Ham, and the Emim in Shaveh Kiriathaim, 6. And the Horites in their Mount Seir, to the oak of Paran, which *is* by the wilderness. 7. And they returned, and

Rephaim. These were a giant race of astounding stature and strength; the iron bed of their last King Og, in Bashan, measured nine yards in length, and four in breadth; they were indeed regarded as the representatives of all formidable gigantic tribes, as the Emim and Anakim. On the eastern side of the Jordan they spread from the foot of Mount Hermon far southward; and though they were later pressed back by the Moabites and Ammonites, the territory of Og yet extended down to Heshbon, and included sixty fortified cities. In the west of the Jordan they occupied some central parts of Palestine, and that extensive and fertile plain in the south-west of Jerusalem, which received from them the name of "the valley of Rephaim." In their eastern habitations, they were extirpated at an early period, and their last remains were destroyed by Moses; but in the west they continued long to terrify the Hebrews, and in the time of David even it was necessary to oppose their insulting arrogance. The Rephaim, like some of the other extraordinary tribes which we shall presently mention, seem to have formed a part of the primeval or original population of the land; but they were gradually diminished, repressed and extirpated by the immigrating Canaanites. The question to which branch of the Noachic family those nations belonged cannot be answered from the Pentateuch; they are not embodied in the universal list; and we are here, in fact, taken by surprise by their introduction. These facts lead to the important conclusion, that the genealogy of nations is the result of a grand *idea* of the Hebrew writer; that he intended to enjoin the unity of the human race; that although many other tribes existed at his time, or had flourished before, he deemed it unimportant to insert them, contented to have laid down the general principle, and preferring to leave to man its application to individual cases; this was a part of the plan of education which his book was intended to serve. However, if we remember the enmity which prevailed between the Rephaim and the other giant tribes on the one hand, and both the Canaanites and the Hebrews on the other, we are induced to think, that they were regarded neither as Hamites nor Shemites, but as Japhethites, who, as we have noticed, comprised especially the inhabitants of the coast and islands; the original abodes of the Rephaim seem, indeed, to have been on the Mediterranean coast of Canaan, where their last remnants still lingered in the time of David. — The principal town of the Rephaim at the time of the eastern invasion was *Ashteroth Karnaim*, that is, the town dedicated to the *horned Ashtoreth*, (the Moon and Venus), and was hence called "the house of Ashtarte." It was situated in the district of Bashan, about six Roman miles from Edrei; after it had been conquered by the Hebrews, it was assigned to the tribe of Manasseh, and was later selected as one of the Levitical towns. It is still mentioned as a strongly fortified town in the books of the Maccabees, under the names of Karnain and Karnion, containing a celebrated temple of the goddess.

2. The next tribe which succumbed to the arms of the Asiatic invaders is that of *the Zuzim.* They belonged to the same class of the population as the Rephaim; were a wild and ferocious people, occupying the districts between the rivers Arnon and Jabbok; but were later extirpated by the Ammonites, in whose language they were called *Zamzummim* (Deut.

came to En-mishpat, that *is* Kadesh, and smote all the territory of the Amalekites, and even the Amorites who dwelt in Hazezon-tamar.—8. And there went out the king of Sodom, and the king of Gomorrah, and the king of Admah, and the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela,

ii. 20, 21). Their principal town seems to have been *Ham*, about the position of which it is impossible to venture a conjecture.

3. *The Emim*, a mighty and a numerous giant race whose very name signifies terror, inhabited partly the territory south of the Arnon; but they were already before Moses' time either expelled from there, or annihilated by the Moabites. But their chief abodes were in the *valley of Kiriathaim*, which was also called the *valley of Shaveh* (ver. 17). It was situated in the district later allotted to the tribe of Reuben; but was, before the exile, again in the hands of the Moabites. In the time of Jerome it was a village bearing the name of Kariatha, and almost exclusively inhabited by a Christian population, about ten Roman miles west of Medeba.

4. *The Horites* are "the inhabitants of *caverns*," who spread especially in the mountains of Seir or Edom. It is generally known that caverns were among the earliest human habitations, which nature herself seemed to have provided; that in later periods, also, they were applied for very various purposes; for the quarters and fortresses of armies, and the lurking-places of robbers and outlaws; for stables and tents of the nomad and the reaper; for the dwellings of the poor and houseless; for graves and temples; for stations of the traveller and the pilgrim; and often for the cells of the hermit and the recluse. Some caverns, enlarged and rendered more convenient by art, were divided into apartments; and some were capable of containing many hundred, and sometimes many thousand individuals. The Troglodytes, in Africa, were not the only nation which lived exclusively in caverns. Some mountainous tracts, if they did not compel, urgently invited, the neighbouring tribes to select them for their habitations; and if some parts of Mount Carmel, or of the highlands of Galilee, Trachonitis, and Batanea were adapted, the large and dry grottoes of Idumæa seemed created, for human occupation. The mountain of Hor, on which Aaron died, derived its name from its numerous natural cavities; and the native tribes inhabiting them were the Horites. They enjoyed long the possession of these districts, and formed many independent polities, perhaps united by a federal government, till they were gradually restricted or repressed by the Edomites. If, therefore, the Horites are called "the sons of Seir," they owe this name no less to their descent than to their habitations in the Mount Seir; and even the Edomites, when they took possession of their territories, and perhaps intermarried with their families, were designated with the same appellation. The mountain of Seir begins in the south of Palestine, not far from the extremity of the Dead Sea and the land of the Moabites; runs in a rugged, steep, and woody chain, dissected, however, by many brooks and fertile valleys, almost exactly southward, extends beyond the valley El-Ahsa and the Wady el Ghuwir down to the head of the Elanitic gulf, and comprises, therefore, the present mountains of Dshebal and El-Shera. The high-land itself spreads, moreover, westward, to the south-eastern frontier of Palestine, and to the borders of the territory of the Amorites and of the tribe of Judah, so that, according to the Greek division, it would form a part of Arabia Petræa. It is, by the prophets, described as so fertile as to lead to effeminacy and wantonness; the inhabitants have their secure abodes in the clefts of the rocks as in natural fortresses, "and have made their nest high like the eagle."

that *is* Zoar; and they joined battle with them in the vale of Siddim; 9. With Chedorlaomer the king of Elam, and with Tidal king of nations, and Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar; four kings with five. 10. And the vale of Siddim *was full of* bitumen pits; and

5. Between the land of Edom, just described, and Egypt, lies *the desert of Paran.* It begins at no great distance south of Beer-sheba, and extends, to the south and south-west, to the desert of Shur, from which it is a three days' journey to Mount Sinai; stretches eastward along the mountain El-Tyh, till it reaches the territory of the Edomites; and is, in the north, bounded by the districts of Canaan, whence it easily afforded David and his followers a place of refuge from the persecutions of Saul. The waste and dreary tract of Paran is intersected by the "river of Egypt," or the Wady el Arish, which flows into the Mediterranean Sea near the little town Rhinocolura. Where it nearly reaches northward to the borders of the wilderness of Judah, was a spot which, like Moreh and Mamre, was described by an oak-tree, no doubt well known to those who travelled in the barren and cheerless sands of Paran; and the "oak of Paran" marks in our narrative the most south-western point to which the allied invaders proceeded.

6. From here they returned; and if they marched northward, they arrived in the desert of Zin, which formed a part of the great wilderness of Paran. Here lay, on the frontier of the Idumæan land, the old province and town of *Kadesh* or *Kadesh-barnea.* It was not distant from the town Gerar, extended from here to the south-eastern districts of Canaan, and formed its southern boundary. Therefore Moses could from here send the scouts for the exploration of the promised land, and treat with the king of Edom regarding the transit of the Hebrew army. The town contained a celebrated well, which, from an unknown but, no doubt, important cause, was called "Well of Judgment," which more ancient name later gave way to that of Kadesh, likewise pointing to the *holy* character of the place. The fountain seems still to exist, under the name of Kudes, in the east of the most elevated part of Dshebel Halal; from there caravan roads lead both to Petra and to Mount Sinai, and to the interior of Palestine; and these circumstances, as well as its position, recommend the conjecture of the identity of this site with that of ancient Kadesh.

7. From this district, the kings continued their destructive career into the *land of the Amalekites,* the principal stock of which lived between Palestine, Idumea, and Mount Sinai (see Commentary on Exodus, p. 230.

8. Emboldened by these successes, the invaders attacked also *the Amorites,* the most powerful tribe of Canaan (see p. 185). They then advanced, with their characteristic impetuosity, to the very shores of the Dead Sea, to the town *Engedi,* at that time called *Hazezon-tamar,* one of the chief cities of the Amorites. As its ancient name indicates, it was situated in a region rich in palm-trees; and from various Biblical allusions we gather, that it fell within the circumference of the Desert of Judah; that it lay on the western shore of the Dead Sea; that its vicinity was distinguished by steep rocks and rugged hills, and cave-like ravines and recesses; but also by beautiful balm-, wine-, and date-plantations. According to Josephus, its distance from Jerusalem was 300 stadia. With this statement agree the ruins which have but recently been found at and near Ain Dshiddi, a beautiful fountain lying in a mountainous region, nearly in the centre of the western side of the Dead Sea, almost in the same latitude as Hebron, and forming a small brook flowing into that sea. A vegetation of all the luxuriance of the south surrounds

the king of Sodom and *that of* Gomorrah fled, and fell there; and the rest fled to the mountain. 11. And they took all the property of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and departed.—12. And they took Lot, the son of Abram's brother, and his property, and they departed: for

it; but the palm-plantations have vanished from its neighbourhood, and the fields and gardens with which the terraces were once adorned, await the regenerating power of future industry.

The princes of the five towns (Pentapolis) led forth their armies, to oppose the enemy, into the *valley of Siddim*, the position of which, at no great distance from Engedi, cannot be doubtful, especially if we consider the further description of our text, that it was "full of asphalt-pits" (ver. 10), which leads us to the neighbourhood of the Dead Sea, a locality so celebrated for its mineral that the Lake itself is called the Asphalt Sea, which, it was believed, later covered the site of the valley (ver. 3), in consequence of a grand revolution of nature, which forms a stirring episode in the narrative of Genesis.—The defeat of the five kings of the district of the Jordan was decisive; those who did not perish in the battle, fled eastward into the mountains which intersect the territory of the Moabites; for they could not safely escape westward to the mountains of Judah, from which direction the enemies victoriously advanced.

12—16. Among the captives of war whom the conquerors had torn from their homes was Lot, the son of Abraham's brother; and a part of the spoil which their rapacity had seized was Lot's wealth. The narrative, which seemed to have strayed beyond its orbit, here returns towards its centre; it becomes at once clear why the din and tumult of arms had been carried into the peace and calmness of reflection; why the prospect of a brilliant future had been disturbed by a stormy and violent present. However, the sanguinary drama of the war was not concluded; the most notable feat remained to be achieved; and Abraham himself was destined to perform it. When a fugitive reported to him his relative's misfortune, the serene patriarch, to whose harmonious mind even the contentions of the shepherds had been intolerable, was at once converted into a military hero; the generous glow of his heart was kindled at the thought of his kinsman's degrading misery, and heedless of the overwhelming multitude of the proud enemies, he headed the 318 men of his household, and marched out in pursuit of the pagan hosts. At the northern borders of the land, in Dan, he overtook them: he conquered alike by prudence and by valour, and drove before him the scattered armies, over a long tract up to Hobah, in the north of Damascus, far beyond the boundaries of Canaan—a bright example for his descendants, that the peaceful duties of faith should not enervate courage and manly strength; a forcible lesson, that true power is not in the multitude of horses and chariots, but in the invisible assistance of God; and that the "hosts of the Lord," the warriors of His faith, must be ready to establish and to extend His empire, if occasion requires, by the sword and the spear. And to Abraham alone should belong the glory of defeating and pursuing the powerful princes, who, formidable in themselves, seemed invincible by the long chain of victories they had just completed. The interest of the patriarch in the land of Canaan had, since his return from Egypt, become considerably stronger; till then the holy places alone, which he had dedicated to the pure worship, had been dear to him; but we learn now that human ties also bound him to the inhabitants; he had contracted friendships and formed alliances; he was no more an entire stranger in a strange land; he was soon to be its greatest bene-

he was dwelling in Sodom. 13. And there came one of those that had escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew; for he was residing at the oak-grove of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner; and these *were* confederate with Abram. 14. And when Abram heard that his kinsman was taken captive, he led forth his tried *servants*, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued *them* till Dan. 15. And he divided himself against them by night, he and his servants, and defeated them, and

factor. Mamre, the Amorite, and his two brothers, Eshcol and Aner, were joined with him in confederacy; they also were rich proprietors, and possessed no doubt many men capable of bearing arms; Abraham did not shun the social or military connection with the heathens; for him none of the reasons existed which later induced zealous prophets to denounce political alliances with the heathens with rigour and abhorrence; his firm belief, in spite of such connections, was above all danger or temptation; and far from detracting thereby from the glory of the God of the Hebrews as the only Rescuer, he strengthened the dawning faith in the Creator of heaven and earth (ver. 19). By associating Mamre and his two brothers to the expedition, he neither resigned nor lost the position as leader; the alliance did not reduce him into a relation of inferiority or dependence; and we hear of the participation of his confederates in the prizes, rather than in the labours of the war (vers. 15, 24). Such being the train of ideas which the author intended to embody, it would be perverse to argue the question of the possibility of a few hundred servants destroying the well-disciplined armies of four powerful Asiatic kings. Israel was to learn, "There is no king saved by the multitude of a host; the horses are vain for safety; but the eye of the Lord is upon those who hope in His mercy" (Ps. xxxiii. 16—18). This great lesson of faith was to be enjoined by the first and only military encounter of the patriarch, who was their example and their loftiest model; it was done in a form less astonishing to those who remember that eastern nomads not unfrequently, with surprising quickness, transform themselves into military bodies, and seizing the arms with which they usually are provided for such emergencies, courageously march out either for aggression or defence.

Abraham employed almost the whole of the simple system of tactics constituting the art of war of the Hebrews to a late period. The army was generally divided into three parts, to attack the enemy simultaneously in the centre and on the two wings; the assault was sudden, and often from an ambush; and the night was preferred for these stratagems. The Hebrew army consisted for a long time only of infantry; it was not before Solomon's time that a powerful cavalry was added; and it is natural that Abraham also should here be represented as undertaking his expedition with foot-soldiers only. — He followed the enemy in a north-eastern direction beyond Damascus to Hobah, which was, in Eusebius' time, a little village, inhabited chiefly by Christians belonging to the sect of the Ebionites. The identifications of this place by modern travellers are uncertain.

17—24. When Abraham returned from the north, laden with the booty of four kings, the prince of Sodom met him in the valley of Shaveh; and to show the high importance of this victory, it was accompanied by a solemnity which produces a greater impression by the mysterious character both of the chief officiating individual, and of the act itself. Everything is here significant, everything typical; and

pursued them to Hobah, which *is* on the left hand of Damascus. 16. And he brought back all the property, and brought also back his kinsman Lot and his property, and the women also, and the people.—17. And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after his return from defeating Chedorlaomer, and the kings who *were* with him, at the valley of Shaveh, that *is* the valley of the king. 18. And Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought out bread and wine: and he *was* a priest of the most high God.

it is obvious that the dim background is designed to veil a grand religious and political future. The king of Salem, Melchizedek, also proceeded to meet Abraham; and he was "a priest to the most high God." How did the heathen king arrive at the knowledge, and how did he persevere in the worship of the most high God? Abraham had not long since been appointed as the man through whose seed all the nations should be blessed, and through whom alone the doctrines of the pure faith should be spread and acknowledged. We appear, then, suddenly to find another stem besides that of Abraham, destined to gather the nations under the shadow of its branches. But we may suppose that Abraham's exemplary conduct, the almost ideal purity of his life, and the magnanimity of his principles, secured to him, though a stranger, the sympathy of many Canaanites; and as he obtained the friendship and alliance of Mamre and his brothers, so his example and influence gained the mind of the righteous Melchizedek to the true belief. However, though Melchizedek acknowledged the same God as Abraham, and called Him also the "Creator of heaven and earth"; he did not comprehend Him in His profoundest attributes; he knew Him only as the Almighty, as the Creator and Ruler of the Universe; whilst Abraham worshipped Him as *Jehovah*, which sublime name he added before the designation employed by Melchizedek (compare ver. 19 and 22). Thus the religious enlightenment of the king of Salem was but a ray of the sun of Abraham's faith; and, scarcely sufficient as it was in itself entirely to dispel the darkness, it could not be intended to spread a light to distant regions.—This is another instance of the extreme carefulness of the Scriptures in the application of the names of the Deity; the serpent was not allowed to profane the holy name (iii. 1—5); Japheth, though blessed, stood not under the direct protection of Jehovah (ix. 27); and Melchizedek, though a believer in God, had not entirely understood the God of the Hebrews.

He united in his person the dignities of king and priest; a combination of offices, which, though usual in primæval communities, was later divided into two co-ordinate, and often subordinate functions; and yet was it the ideal of a theocracy, that the worldly and spiritual power should be united in the same person; therefore it was promised, both in the Old and New Testament, that the great king, in whom all the glorious hopes were to be realised, should be a priest after the order of Melchizedek (Ps. cx. 4; Heb. v. 6; vi. 20; vii.); and hence a dignitary who united these venerable capacities, came forth to bless Abraham at the momentous period, when he had just saved the land of Canaan, and had thus, in a strictly political and worldly sense also, laid the foundation for his claims to the possession of that land.—He brought out to Abraham bread and wine, not to refresh him or his men; for Abraham had among the booty of the enemies seized their large stores of provisions also (vers. 11, 24), but to perform a symbolical ceremony, in which bread and wine had a

19. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed *be* Abram of the most high God, Creator of heaven and earth: 20. And blessed be the most high God, who hath delivered thy enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all. 21. And the king of Sodom said to Abram, Give me the persons, and take the property to thyself. 22. And

typical meaning. For bread represents the ordinary daily food, the necessities of physical subsistence; whilst the wine points to the cheering delights of life and to the spiritual cravings of religion, in the rites of which it formed an important object. If Melchizedek, therefore, blessed Abraham with the symbols of bread and wine, he implored for him and his descendants both worldly prosperity and religious purity; and since bread is the produce of the earth after its curse, and wine was among the first gifts of blessing after the destruction of the depraved human race; both combined, point to the felicity which man, in spite of the toils of his material existence, may enjoy through the truths of religion. And while the gold and silver acquired by Abraham besides the herds and flocks (xiii. 2), foreshadow the future monarchy, the bread and wine of Melchizedek typify the future theocracy. The benediction proves that Abraham owed his victory to that combination of external prosperity and religious excellence by which his progeny was to conquer and to shine. Thus alone the bread and the wine stand in an internal connection with the blessing, for the symbolical illustration of which those products were offered.

Abraham, who had been blessed by God, and who had been emphatically promised to be himself the blessing of all generations, gratefully received the benediction of the priest of a heathen nation; he did not harbour in his mind religious pride, despising those who were less favoured than himself with the communion of the Deity. A universal brotherhood had been promised, both in social connections, and religious views; and Abraham, the Hebrew, was the first to exhibit that toleration which is ready to recognize the working of Divine mercy in every pure mind, and which is the first step towards the gradual gathering of all nations under one great banner of love.—As a consequence of his acknowledgement of Melchizedek's legitimate dignity, he offered to him, as the servant of God, the tenth part of all the wealth which was in his hands; he thereby spontaneously subordinated himself to his spiritual authority, and gave to his descendants the example how to honour and support the priests. That this example, like most of the patriarch's virtues, is faithfully reflected in the Law, is not less certain than the fact, that in the practical life of the later Hebrews, it was either partly neglected, or greatly outstepped.

The place of meeting was near the town Salem. As everything is significant in this remarkable event, it is impossible to suppose that the town where Abraham received the prophetic blessing, and where he was to appear in a new and striking light, should be without its anticipatory meaning. There is no reason whatever to understand Salem as any other town but that which the Old Testament elsewhere mentions with the same name, namely Jerusalem; it is called Salem in poetical diction; and it is an incontroverted fact, that poetry frequently adopts archaisms to enhance artistic effect. It is true, that the ancient name of Jerusalem was Jebus, so called from the Jebusites, whose chief town it was; but we may venture the supposition, that Melchizedek and the people over whom he governed, were not Jebusites; his name and that of the town are of purely Shemitic origin, signifying: "the king of justice," and "peace"; it is, therefore, not unlikely that he immigrated, like Abraham, from the east, but not, like the latter, as a

Abram said to the king of Sodom, I lift up my hand to the Lord, the most high God, the Creator of heaven and earth, 23. That I will not *take* from a thread even to a shoe-latchet, and that I will not take any thing that *is* thine; and thou shalt not say, I have made Abram rich: 24. Not I; only that which the young men have eaten,

peaceful nomad, but as a conquering hero; that he took possession of Jebus, and changed its name, in accordance with a very usual custom, as, in fact, such double names occur repeatedly in our chapter. This supposition would, at the same time, facilitate the explanation of Melchizedek's purer religious views, which approach those of Abraham himself. The reasons which have been advanced against the identity of Salem and Jerusalem, are extremely feeble; the latter is said to have a position too much southward; but Abraham's route, from Damascus back to Hebron, led him almost necessarily through Jerusalem, from where he could easily, on the ordinary roads, dismiss the captives of war to their homes in the Pentapolis; it is nothing but a capricious assumption, that Salem must be situated more northward; and it is idle to reject the testimony of the Psalmist in favour of a much later conjecture. Now the whole solemn benediction here pronounced upon Abraham assumes a higher importance, if it proceeded from the king and high-priest of that town which was destined to be the residence of the kings of Abraham's seed, and which was intended to be the centre of the worship of Abraham's God. Jerusalem is the locality of another great event, also related in the Book of Genesis (xxii. 14). The temporal and spiritual blessing was thus transferred from the present ruler of the capital to the later descendants of the patriarch; and the promises of God were prophetically repeated by the only earthly king who worshipped Him. But the *realization* of these assurances is symbolized by the name "Peace or Completion," and it was effected in the "King of Peace," Solomon, who built the Temple, and was pre-eminently distinguished by power and wealth. Thus the combined allusions of this narrative form a picture surprisingly connecting the present with the future, and fully removing the apparent disharmony to which we have adverted at the beginning of the chapter.

When the king of Sodom, in grateful acknowledgment of Abraham's services, offered to him all the treasures which he had taken in the expedition, the patriarch declined them with a vehemence and solemnity which appear almost like indignation and aversion. This must have a moral cause. The desire of proving Abraham's disinterestedness is alone not sufficient to account for it; for thus understood, the emphatic refusal would almost have the character of boasting and self-conscious appreciation of his own virtue, and would deprive it of its peculiar charm and greatness. But although Abraham did not generally refuse presents from heathen monarchs (xii. 16; xx. 14), he detested the thought of accepting the property of the impious men of Sodom; the idea, which pervades all the later Biblical literature, that the wealth of the ungodly is cursed, as the property of Jericho, and all other idolatrous towns of Canaan, and that it is devoted to awful destruction: this idea is here expressed in Abraham's horror of profiting by the riches which were so soon doomed to disappear together with their nefarious proprietors; his energetic oath sworn by the holiest name of God shows, that he considered his safety and his faith involved in the proposal; and if this very offer proved the king of Sodom not destitute of proper sentiments, it accounts for Abraham's hope, that at least ten righteous men would be found in Sodom (xviii. 32). But the refusal of a reward neither excluded a

and the portion of the men who went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre, let them take their portion.

restitution of the outlay incurred for the maintenance of his men during the expedition, nor a protection of the rights of his allies, to whose option it was left whether they wished to exercise the same magnanimous unselfishness, and equally to abstain from the wealth of the wicked; severe to himself, indulgent to others.

CHAPTER XV.

SUMMARY.—When God appeared to Abraham in a vision, and promised him abundant rewards, the patriarch despondingly replied, that he was childless, and that he acquired property to leave it to a stranger and a servant. God promised him innumerable descendants; and added the assurance, that they would possess the land of Canaan. Abraham believed the former promise, but asked for a sign of the realisation of the latter. God granted it in the most imposing forms of a covenant, renewing and enlarging His pledges, and predicting the fate of his progeny till their occupation of the promised land.

1. After these things, the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I *am* thy shield; thy reward *will be* very great. 2. And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt Thou give me, since I go childless, and the proprietor of my house, that *will be* Dammesek Eliezer? 3. And Abram said, Behold, to me Thou hast given no seed: and, behold, *a servant* born in my house is my heir. 4. And, behold, the word of the Lord *came*

1—3. Abraham had returned from his successful expedition; he had almost gained a valid claim upon the land of Canaan, which had now no longer to fear an invasion from the eastern tyrants; but when he compared the Divine promises with the cheerless solitude of his house, not re-echoing with the mirthful happiness of children, and filled with strangers only and with servants, he might begin to view his hopes as illusions, and the blessings promised through his seed as phantoms; and, since his advancing age deprived him more and more of the hope of progeny, he might not unreasonably fear, that even his worldly wealth would pass into the hands of his slaves. Whilst he was engaged in such desponding reflections, God appeared to him in a vision, and silenced his apprehensions. He reminded him, that it was through His miraculous aid that he had vanquished with a few shepherds the warlike hosts of four mighty kings; that He was his shield, and had delivered up the enemies into his hands; and that the same omnipotence could reward his virtue with the fulfilment of the great pledges he had received. Abraham, encouraged by this renewed and spontaneous expression of Divine mercy, did not withhold the cause of his grief and the afflicting sorrow of his heart; he replied, that he passed a joyless life; the beaming smiles of a son did not illumine the gloom and monotony of his days; he toiled for strangers; and strangers would succeed him. As, therefore, the depression of Abraham's mind seemed to grow so intense, that it threatened to destroy his happiness and the calm enjoyment of his possessions, it was necessary not only to repeat the assurances, but to express them in a manner which, by its grandeur and sublimity, might at once

to him, saying, That *man* shall not be thy heir; but he that will come forth of thy own strength shall be thy heir. 5. And He brought him forth outside, and said, Look now toward heaven, and number the stars, if thou be able to number them: and He said to him, So shall thy seed be. 6. And he believed in the Lord; and He accounted it to him for righteousness. 7. And He said to him, I *am* the Lord who brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.—8. And he said, Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? 9. And He said to him, Take for me a heifer three years old, and a she-goat three years old, and a ram three years old,

efface every doubt, and wing the soul for a loftier flight. When God had appeared to him after the separation from Lot, He promised to him "seed like the dust of the earth" (xiii.16). But now, He led him out under the starry vault of heaven; He pointed to those bright luminaries which attract the mind like a beautiful mystery; whose radiance proclaims the infinite power of God, and whose unfading, never-varying purity carries the thought into eternity; and He promised to Abraham a progeny as numerous as these shining orbs. At once were all his apprehensions scattered; despondency yielded to a soaring hope, as endless as it was strong; he forgot all earthly limits, and was entirely filled with celestial infinitude; nothing appeared impossible to that boundless omnipotence which had created those wonderful lights; his heart prostrated itself before that incomprehensible wisdom—AND HE BELIEVED IN GOD. For the first time is that sacred emotion recorded which forms the centre of religion; which confides in things promised but unseen; which conquers every doubt by reliance and resignation; which discovers, through the mists of the present, the sunshine of the future; and which recognizes in the discordant strife of the world the traces of the eternal mind that leads it to an unceasing harmony. Abraham forgot the impossibility which *nature* seemed to interpose between his hopes and their fulfilment; he rose from the real into the ideal; and this abandonment of calculating prudence in favour of confiding faith, was "counted to him as righteousness," as a merit and a claim; he thereby became more perfect, and more deserving of the Divine bounty; and lest his belief should stray to another imagined deity, God repeated now, that it was on His command that he had left the land of the Chaldees; and that it would be by His assistance, that he would possess the land of Canaan.

8—21. However, Abraham's faith was too young to be unlimited. He believed in the innumerable seed; but the address of God alluded to a new hope, the possession of the land into which he had immigrated as an unknown stranger. Here his confidence became doubtful; and although he could not but be conscious that a large population would be able to subdue Canaan's tribes, since he had just, with a few men, defeated powerful conquerors, he demanded *a sign* by which he might be the more certain of the attainment of the distant aim. God heard this request without the remotest reproach. He was mindful of the weakness of the human heart; for the covenant of mercy concluded with Noah for eternity was based on the recognition of that frailty.—In order to make the sign more solemn and more impressive, it was given in the form of a grand *covenant* (ver. 18). The whole of this ceremony must appear enigmatical,

and a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon. 10. And he took for Him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid the piece of each against its other *half:* but the birds he did not divide. 11. And the birds of prey came down upon the carcases, but Abram scared them away. 12. And

unless it is understood as a symbolical indication of those future events, concerning which Abraham had desired a pledge of certainty. Here no less than in the blessing of Melchizedek, is every trait significant, and the more so the holier He is from whom the blessing here proceeds; and though we deprecate mysticism and forced distortions of the text, it would be superficiality to regard the extraordinary rites here detailed as unmeaning acts.—Abraham was ordered to take a heifer, a goat, a ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon (ver. 9). The sacrifice about to be performed, comprised, therefore, *all* the pure animals ordinarily offered according to the Mosaic Law; though not so universal as that of Noah, it was likewise a general sacrifice; it was typical of the offerings later presented in the land now solemnly guaranteed.—The ritual of the covenant itself is that which was frequently applied among most of the ancient nations, the Greeks and Romans, the Chaldeans and the Macedonians. The sacrificial animal was divided into two halves, between which the contracting parties passed, thereby intimating that they would deserve to be so killed if they ventured to violate the agreement. But as, in fact, the act here described was not strictly a covenant, but a sign or promise on the part of God, only given under the form of a covenant, God alone passed through the dissected parts in the shape of clouds, smoke, and fire (ver. 17); Abraham was a passive spectator; and the very beginning of the ceremony points to this feature; for God commanded Abraham: "Take *for me* a heifer," etc. Wherever a real covenant was intended, it was customary among the Hebrews also that both parties should go between the divided animals (Jer. xxxiv. 18, 19), and on one particularly solemn occasion, when a perpetual alliance between God and Israel was ratified, the blood of the sacrifices was partly sprinkled on the altar, which represents God, and partly upon the people (see notes on Exod. xxiv. 4—8). But several other forms of making agreements in use among eastern nations, were excluded either by distinct precepts or by the spirit of the Mosaic law. Among the Medes and Lydians the contracting parties "cut their arms to the outer skin and licked up one another's blood": among the Armenians they joined their right-hands, and tied their thumbs together, compressing them into a knot; they then made the blood flow from their fingers by a puncture and sucked it mutually: among the Arabians a third person made an incision with a sharp stone in the palms of their hands, near the longest finger, after which he smeared seven stones placed between them with the blood: and among the Scythians they mingled wine with their blood, dipped a scimetar, some arrows, a hatchet, and a javelin in the vessel, and then drank the mixture, of which most of the witnesses present partook. Such rites would have been an abomination in the eyes of the Hebrews; since they were not only forbidden to make incisions in the body, because they are a holy people and a nation of priests whose persons must be kept perfect and faultless; but they regarded the drinking of human blood with nameless horror, since even abstinence from the blood of animals was among their fundamental laws.

After Abraham had prepared the sacrifice, dividing the animals except the birds, and placing the parts, as well as the pigeon and turtledove, opposite each other, unclean birds of prey descended upon them eager to satisfy their voracity; but Abraham drove them away, and thus rendered by his care the conclusion of

when the sun was going down, sleep fell upon Abram; and, behold, a terror of great darkness fell upon him. 13. And He said to Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed will be a stranger in a land *that is* not theirs—and will serve them, and they will afflict them—four hundred

the covenant possible. It will be readily perceived that the vultures wildly endeavouring to frustrate the alliance between God and Israel, symbolise the Egyptians, in whose impure country, contaminated by degrading idolatry, the Hebrews were enslaved and oppressed, almost beyond the hope of ever entering the promised land, and thus enjoying the realisation of the sign here granted. And this thraldom is indeed emphatically predicted; the meaning of the rapacious birds of prey falling upon the pure sacrifices consecrated to God, is immediately explained; the descendants of Abraham would be strangers in another land for several centuries, and pine under the yoke of foreign tyranny. But as Abraham drove away the vultures, so his merit would ultimately avert the destruction of the Israelites. The Egyptians aimed especially at lessening the growing numbers of the Hebrews; but Abraham had just proved his faith by believing in a numerous progeny although he had no earthly prospects of obtaining it; his faith was counted to him as righteousness; and by this righteousness his descendants were saved: if Abraham was intended as a blessing to remote nations, he was first to be the rescue and the blessing of his own seed.

A day intervened between the request of Abraham and the conclusion of the ceremony. For the vision took place in the evening when the stars were shining; the vultures came before sunset of the next day (ver. 12), and the ratification ensued in the darkness of the night (ver. 17).—Towards the evening when all preparations for the performance of the solemn rite were completed, a profound sleep fell upon Abraham, and when he awoke he was terrified by the dense darkness which surrounded him (ver. 12). In this part of the narrative the first feature only has reference to the history of Israel, whilst the latter is a frequent and characteristic concomitant of solemn and awful Divine manifestations. The sleep of Abraham is the other side of the idea foreshadowed by the descending vultures; the Israelites themselves nearly destroyed their own hopes and prospects by their forgetfulness of the covenant; they followed the superstitions of the Egyptians and were thus in danger of forfeiting the rewards stipulated by the ancestral covenant. Whilst the Egyptian servitude ought to have redoubled their vigilance, it perniciously tended to relax it; though the voracious birds had fallen upon the sacrifice, Abraham allowed himself to be overpowered by sleep. Four hundred years were his descendants destined to remain in the strange land; this round number, appropriate in prophetic announcement, is in the later historical account more accurately stated at 430 years; and this is the period which elapsed from the immigration under Jacob to the Exodus under Moses. But their thraldom began only with the accession of the "new king," who did not know Joseph and his services, when the Israelites had already increased to such a degree as to give alarm to the Egyptian king. Although, therefore, their sojourn in the foreign country extended to more than four centuries, their oppression was of a much more limited duration, a fact which is evident from several clear historical indications.—But the people which loaded upon itself the crimes of cruelty and inhospitality, would also suffer; they would be visited by the Divine judgments; they would by a series of awful plagues be brought to feel their heartless injustice; and then only they would dismiss the strangers honouring them with wealth and treasures, and forced to acknowledge the omnipotence and greatness of their God.

years. 14. But that nation also, which they will serve, I shall judge: and afterwards they will go out with great property. 15. But thou shalt come to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. 16. And

However, the patriarch himself would be perfectly exempted from those trials; though, indeed, also compelled by famine to take up his temporary abode in another land, he would die happily and peacefully in Canaan, after having enjoyed a long and prosperous life (ver. 15). The death of Abraham is predicted in one of those remarkable phrases which seem to prove that the Hebrews were not unacquainted with the doctrine of immortality. Here the return of the soul to the eternal abodes of the fathers is, with some distinctness, separated from the interment of the body; that both cannot be identical is evident; for whilst Abraham was entombed in Canaan, all his forefathers died and were buried in Mesopotamia; and the re-union of the spirits is, in some passages, expressed still more clearly by the term of being "gathered to the fathers"; after the fact of the death itself had been stated, and with a separate allusion to the act of sepulture (Gen. xxv. 8, 9; xlix. 29, 33; Num. xx. 24,26; xxxi. 2; Luke xx. 37; see p. 111).

The "fourth generation" after the settlement of Jacob in Egypt was promised to be led back to Palestine. Unless we suppose these words to contain an obvious discrepancy, the four "generations" must embrace a period of more than four hundred years; and no alternative is left but to understand here that term as the duration of life, which, as a general rule, was allotted to man after the deluge (vi. 3); so that four complete generations would comprise 480 years; and the end of the 430 years of the Israelites' sojourn in Egypt would fall within the fourth.

A reason is added, why it was necessary to defer the fulfilment of the promise to such a remote future; and that reason is most significant; it contains a religious principle inferior to none in importance and purity in the whole theology of the Old Testament; and it destroys at once the cavilling attacks of those who question the legitimacy of the claims which the Pentateuch assigns to the Hebrews for the extirpation of the Canaanites and the occupation of their land. "The iniquity of the Amorites was not yet complete." Before they had thus merited, yea, rendered inevitable, their destruction, their existence was prolonged; they could still return to the path of righteousness, although God's prescience was certain that their hearts were for ever averted from virtue. The annihilation of the Canaanites was a grand act of Divine government and providence. God allowed them the possession of a blooming land, on which His loving eye watches from the beginning of the year to the end of the year (Deut. xi. 12); He made them prosper in their social and political conditions; they were numerous and wealthy; they had fortified cities and towering houses; they lived in splendour and in plenty: but the Sodomites were an example how little they were able to bear this happiness; if they owed their land to Divine mercy, they necessarily lost it by Divine justice; the punishment of the wicked is as indispensable a part of the moral government of the world as the reward of the pious. Now, it was the plan of God to educate, in the seed of Abraham, a people through which He might spread eternal truth among all nations; and He assigned to them the land which the Canaanites could no longer maintain; because they were like the rotten fruit falling from its tree, and devoid of the germ of life. If we survey, at a glance, the Biblical system with regard to this subject, we are surprised by its grandeur and comprehensiveness. The Canaanites themselves were not the original inhabitants of the land; they settled there after having destroyed most of the earlier tribes, the Rephaim, the Emim, the Anakim, and

in the fourth generation they shall return hither: for the iniquity of the Amorites *is* not yet complete. — 17. And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dense darkness, behold, a smoking furnace, and

others; they had, therefore, had a personal example how God punishes wantonness and impiety; but they were not warned by it; they gradually fell into the same vices and crimes; and they were doomed to suffer the same extreme judgment. But whilst the measure of their iniquity was filling, God reared in a foreign land the future occupants of their abodes; the degeneracy of the Canaanites kept pace with the increase and development of the Israelites; however great and awful the former might have been, the God of mercy protracted and delayed long the day of judgment; and however glorious Abraham's merit was, on account of which his descendants were destined to possess Canaan, the God of justice did not accelerate their deliverance from the oppression in Egypt, which they had deserved by their faithlessness. Far from partiality, God almost inverted His relation with regard to the heathens and to the Hebrews; He showed long-suffering indulgence to the former, and inexorable severity to the latter; and when His chosen people followed, in their turn, the evil ways of the tribes of Canaan, they were, like them, subjugated, exiled, or killed. The Israelites, regenerated by their trials in the desert, were the instruments of chastisement to the Canaanites; as, later, the Assyrians and Babylonians, though unconscious of their office and mission, were used as the rod of destruction against the Israelites. This is the only view in which the occupation of Palestine by the Hebrews can be regarded according to the Biblical allusions. Whatever may be judged of the *fact* of the occupation itself, the reasons and principles by which the Bible strives to justify it, are spiritual and sublime in the highest degree; they are the emanations of the purest and grandest religious notions; and it is blindness or fanaticism to disavow or heedlessly to misconstrue them. A fuller discussion of this subject is reserved to the passages where it is more immediately introduced; but we cannot dismiss it without a few additional remarks in this place. The conquest of Canaan by the Hebrews was no wild carnage, merely undertaken for the sake of glory, or from sanguinary cruelty; hence, peace was offered to all the cities beyond the limits of Canaan; hence, the Gibeonites were admitted into confederacy, because they pretended to come from another land, and to belong to another people. The entire extirpation of the *Canaanites* was, indeed, commanded; but this was an imperative necessity, lest the Israelites should be infected by pernicious example, and lest they should be continually attacked and disturbed by the remaining heathens. However, the Israelites had the same weakness which the present opponents of that measure betray; they did not complete their task; they permitted a great part of the heathens to live among them; thus, their faith was in continual fluctuations, and their political safety in constant danger. Violence or avarice had no share in the conquest; for, according to the Biblical notions, God Himself gives to every people their land; the Israelites had no human right to the possession of Canaan; it was the gift and favour of God; if He had deemed that occupation an injustice, He would have given to His chosen people another land, the appropriation of which would not have come into collision with the lawful interests of others. However objectionable the conduct of the Hebrews may have been, the theology of the Pentateuch is pure and stainless.—Thus, we avoid all unnecessary justifications of the alleged "invasion" of the Hebrews; for it is urged, that Canaan had, by Noah's distribution, fallen to the lot of the Shemites, not of the Hamites; that it belonged, from times immemorial, to Abraham and his chil-

a flame of fire that passed between those pieces. 18. On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, To thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates, 19. The

dren, especially by the purchase of the cave of Machpelah, and of other property, whereas, in fact, the Canaanites undoubtedly possessed it before the patriarch's time; that the rights of property were, in those early times, not yet strictly defined, and that the Israelites were, therefore, entitled to conquer as much land as they required; we avoid these and all the other artificial attempts, which lose their little degree of probability at a closer examination.

After the sun had set, the chief part of the ceremony took place (ver. 17); God appeared under the attributes which were generally believed to manifest His presence. As He intended to give a pledge of the future, it was necessary that He should pass through the dissected parts; and He sent dense smoke and flaming fire. When the Israelites traversed the dreary wilderness on their way to the land here promised to them, there was likewise a pillar of cloud and a pillar of fire to guide them, and to assure them of the Divine protection. The *sign* given for the later possession of the Holy Land was cheeringly recalled to the minds of the Hebrews, when dangers and troubles seemed to destroy all their hopes.— The promise was now ratified; but, in order to enhance its force, it was repeated with some significant modifications. The extent of the land is here described as far more comprehensive than before. In the preceding assurances, the land of Canaan alone was granted; but now, the boundaries are promised to reach in the south to Egypt, and in the east to Mesopotamia; it was the intention of God, that the land of the Hebrews should comprise all the territories between the Nile and the Euphrates; and that it should be a *perfect* inheritance; and, therefore, for the first time, *ten* nations are enumerated which they would destroy, and three of which had never been mentioned before. "The river of Egypt" is the Nile, and is to be distinguished from "the brook of Egypt," or the Wadi el-Arish, which flows into the Mediterranean where the coast begins to bend in a western direction. It is true, the history of Israel teaches that their land never reached to the Nile, although it may, at some period, have extended to the Euphrates; but it must be remembered, that the promise was designed to stimulate and to encourage them; and that it was proposed as the ideal aim which they might attain by an undaunted will; whereas, in reality, they suffered heathen tribes to occupy even large portions of Canaan itself.

The Kenites inhabited rocky and mountainous tracts in the south and south-west of Palestine, near the territory of the Amalekites; they may have spread, in a western direction, to the land of Egypt; so that, by their expulsion, the frontiers of the promised land would have nearly touched the valley of the Nile. They showed sympathy and friendship to the Hebrews at the time of the exodus; and hence, Saul was anxious not to harm them when he marched against the Amalekites. It is to these feelings of gratitude that we must ascribe the fact, that even David, far from attempting their destruction, entertained friendly relations with them, especially as Jethro or Hobab, the father-in-law of Moses, though priest of Midian, belonged to the tribe of the Kenites. A part of Jethro's descendants had emigrated from the south to northern Palestine, into the province of Naphthali, and here preserved the old amicable intercourse with the Hebrews. It is, therefore, necessary to suppose, that some branches of the Kenites shared the hostile sentiments of the Amalekites, among whom they lived; and that they were either killed, or expelled from the southern frontiers; while the rest, like

Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, 20. And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaim, 21. And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.

Jethro himself, acknowledged the greatness and omnipotence of God, and could, thus, not become so dangerous to the Hebrews by their religious notions.

The Kenizzites are only mentioned in this passage; and as nothing is stated but the name, it is impossible to decide about their abodes.

The Kadmonites are, as their name indicates, *eastern* tribes; and they comprise, perhaps, all the nations to the Euphrates; so that, in reality, the ten tribes here enumerated, fill up the territories between the Euphrates and the Nile. The localities inhabited by the seven other nations, have been described before (see pp. 183—187).

Abraham had readily *believed* in the promise of a numerous seed (ver. 6); but he demanded a *sign* for the possession of the land (ver. 9). In this conduct of the patriarch, the fate of his seed and of the land is mirrored. Abraham's progeny seems indestructible and imperishable; and, though scattered over all the countries of the earth, it is united by an invisible bond of common hopes: thus, the *faith* of Abraham is rewarded. But the land of Canaan was not only lost after a few centuries of possession, but it was, in many parts, converted into a dreary wilderness and a barren waste: thus, the *doubt* of Abraham was punished.

CHAPTER XVI.

SUMMARY.—Ten years after Abraham's immigration into Canaan, when Sarah was still childless, he took, by her desire, her Egyptian maid Hagar, who conceived, but assumed in consequence such overbearing conduct towards her mistress, that Abraham, to preserve domestic peace, could not shield her against Sarah's resentment. Hagar escaped, and on her way to Egypt came into the desert, where an angel appeared to her; commanded her to return and to submit to Sarah's authority; and promised her a son, whom she should call Ishmael, and through whom she would become the mother of numberless and far-spreading descendants, distinguished by undaunted strength and love of liberty. She followed the injunction, after having given an appropriate name to the place hallowed by the vision; and in the eighty-sixth year of Abraham's life she became the mother of Ishmael.

1. Now Sarai, Abram's wife, bore him no children: and she had a handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name *was* Hagar.

1—3. For the third time had the promise of a numberless progeny been granted to Abraham; he relied on it without doubt and hesitation; "against hope he believed in hope"; and the first great triumph of faith was achieved. For in leaving Chaldea to follow God into a land unknown to him, he manifested only a pious obedience, in which he was supported by experience and possibility; he knew that there existed even more fertile lands than the plains of Mesopotamia, and that many nomadic chiefs had before him succeeded in acquiring new and better abodes. But it demanded nothing less than a reversion of the laws of nature that an aged couple, themselves conscious of their decrepitude, should be blessed with offspring; yet Abraham did not doubt that the powers of nature obey the Creator of heaven and earth. However, if even Abraham's faith had required a sign for

2. And Sarai said to Abram, Behold now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go to my maid; I may perhaps obtain children by her. And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai. 3. And Sarai, Abram's

the possession of Canaan, it cannot be surprising that Sarah's confidence was deficient and wavering. She could not exalt herself to the belief in a miraculous fulfilment of the promise; and she tried to effect it in a natural manner. This hasty interference in the Divine plan was the more excusable, as Sarah had nowhere been designated as the mother of the future people; it was even an act of self-denial to resign all claims to that glory, and to leave it to one in every way subordinate to her. She chose for that end an expedient very general in the East under similar circumstances, and resorted to even by such nations among which monogamy is the rule and the law. The Oriental lives only in his children; he considers his existence fruitless if he leaves none behind him to perpetuate his name; he is like a tree without a root; he withers away and perishes. This is a purely moral sentiment; but it is enhanced by worldly considerations. If the Oriental is insulted, he looks for his children to protect his honour; if he is attacked, he confides in their zeal and love for his revenge; if he dies, he knows to whom to leave the property for which he has toiled. Since, therefore, children constituted a chief part of earthly happiness, it was natural that they should have been regarded as a reward of God; whilst barrenness was viewed as one of the greatest curses of heaven. It was not only pitied as a misfortune, but considered as a reproach; it appeared as a punishment for secret sins; and the couple were despised by men, because they were believed to be rejected by God. Now this is a most dangerous prejudice; it seeks vainly to penetrate into the mysteries of Providence; it starts from the obnoxious principle, that virtue and vice are always visibly rewarded on earth by external boons; and it raises the physical nature of man into a witness for or against his spiritual condition. Such perverse notions could not be tolerated by the Hebrew writer; they are based upon most imperfect conceptions concerning God and His government; and it was therefore necessary that they should be eradicated as thoroughly as the prejudices regarding a short life and a sudden death, which were shown, by the history of Abel and Enoch, not necessarily to be a punishment and a curse. Hence we see that the wives of all the three patriarchs, the favourites of God, were long barren; Sarah bore a child when she was already past all hope, Rebekah after she had been married for twenty years, and Rachel when she seemed likewise to have already renounced her fond wishes. Children are indeed "a heritage of God"; but they are, like every other gift, granted in harmony with His inscrutable designs; they are like "arrows in the hand of the mighty hero," either to defend or to attack, or to rebound upon himself.—The Hebrews soon emancipated themselves from those common oriental views; the purity with which they conceived the idea of matrimony necessarily influenced their notions concerning its highest blessing; they found it to consist in that faithful love which is "as strong as death" (Cant. viii. 6), and in that sympathy of souls which is a help and consolation in the difficulties of life. Hence we see, that Elkanah preserved his affection for Hannah unaltered, although she was barren; he honoured her even more than her rival, who had blessed him with children; and when she was grieved at the insulting language of Peninnah, he soothed her sorrow by the touching question: "Am I not better to thee than ten sons?" (1 Sam. i. 1—8). We know, further, that David's heart was so attached to Michal, that, though she was barren, he reclaimed her after a forced separation of many years. We might, therefore, rea-

wife, took Hagar her maid, the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram *to be* his wife. 4. And he went to Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she

dily acknowledge that the birth of a child, and especially of a son, spread joy and exultation in the family, whilst the death or the want of offspring caused anguish and lamentation; that sterility and an unmarried state were, especially in women, regarded as a serious misfortune; that children were a crown and an ornament to their parents; and that a fruitful wife was a blessing to herself and to her husband; all these feelings are so natural to the human mind that no religious system could deaden or destroy them; and if, sometimes, indeed, children are represented as a reward, and barrenness as a punishment, this must be received in the same light in which the Bible regards every other temporal boon or misery which God sends to manifest either His satisfaction or His displeasure. It was sufficient to be conscious that not in all instances conjugal happiness allows a conclusion to the piety or impiety of the couple: and this idea is clearly embodied in the history of the patriarchs.

If a matrimonial alliance remains for some time without progeny, it is customary among many eastern nations, even those which entertain purer views on matrimony, that the husband, with the consent of his wife, should take another person for the only purpose of securing heirs. She does not share the husband's affection with the legal wife, to whom she is regarded as subordinate, to whom her children are considered to belong; and "upon whose knees she bears" (xxx. 3). Now, the proposal of seeking posterity in accordance with this custom proceeded from Sarah herself, not from Abraham. The patriarch, although desiring children not less intensely than Sarah (xv. 2, 3), never thought of wronging the wife of his youth and his covenant. In his heart monogamy was a sacred principle, to which Isaac also adhered, and which even Jacob acknowledged, although the fraud of Laban induced him to abandon it. The object of Sarah in bringing Hagar to Abraham is distinctly expressed: "perhaps I may be edified by her"; children form or build the house; they are not only its pillars and foundations, but the very materials of which it consists; without them the family must perish. Hence children and house are used as synonymous terms; building a house is applied for establishing a family; and the wives of the patriarchs are said to have founded the house of Israel.

Hagar was born in Egypt; Sarah's chief servant belonged to a foreign nation, as Abraham's principal slave descended from Damascus; in these facts, the future subjugation of other powerful countries is reflected. Sarah may have acquired Hagar at the sojourn in Egypt during the first famine (xii. 16); but as her name is Shemitic, signifying *flight*, we must regard it as a later designation derived from her future destinies, as is frequently the case with Biblical names, while her original Egyptian name is not mentioned.

4—6. When Sarah disclosed her proposal to Abraham, it might occur to him, that the promises were only made to *him*, and not to Sarah; and that she had indicated the only reasonable way for obtaining a descendant through whom the great assurances of God might be fulfilled. It was in this light that Abraham's conduct was always viewed by the Hebrews; and the prophet Malachi emphatically blamed those who pretend that they are permitted, like the patriarch, to take another besides their legal wife (ii. 15): in them, it would be treachery, whilst in Abraham it was faith, "that he might seek a godly seed." —Not only Hagar, however, but even Sarah, failed to rise to the purity of Abraham's exalted notions; they saw, in the

had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes. 5. And Sarai said to Abram, My wrong *be* upon thee: I have given my maid into thy bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes: the Lord may judge between me and thee. 6. But Abram said to Sarai, Behold, thy maid *is* in thy hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarai humiliated her, she

expected child, nothing but an heir; they regarded each other with the invidious eyes of rivals; and that which was commenced as an act of belief and submission, ended in bitter envy and strife. The cause of the contention, however, was the Egyptian maid-servant, who, naturally, was still less capable of self-control and of religious sentiments; she despised her mistress. The latter was mortified. Abraham did not interfere in their dissensions; his heart was filled with the great and joyous hope of an offspring, and he hesitated to rebuke her to whom he was to owe so much happiness. But this regard roused the whole anger of Sarah which broke forth in impetuous indignation; she considered herself wronged both by her husband and her servant, but more grievously by the former; she invoked God as judge of the injustice she suffered; and charged Abraham that he repaid her self-denial with ingratitude. And now another opportunity was granted to Abraham to unfold the greatness of his character; and he proved worthy of the trial. His answer to Sarah's excited complaints was not only remarkable for its calmness and justice; but for the decisiveness with which he continued to regard Sarah as the only mistress of the house and of his affections, and Hagar only as her servant, whom she might treat as she thought fit. But these traits, though laudable, are inferior in importance to the sublime resignation with which he at once again abandoned his long-cherished hopes when they seemed so near their realization. For he had in his mind connected all his future happiness with the child of Hagar (xvii. 18); but he sacrificed this child to the peace of Sarah, as he was later ready to sacrifice the son of Sarah to the will of God. Thus is the answer of Abraham the fore-runner of the most glorious act of his life.

7—12. Hagar intended to return to Egypt, her native country. Her path led, therefore, from Hebron through the desert of Shur, or Dshofar, extending from the south-west of Palestine down to the head of the Red Sea, and even considerably southward on its eastern and western coast. Whilst in this wilderness, and on the way to a locality more properly called Shur, she rested at a fountain. Here an angel of God appeared to her. Though omniscient, he asked her, whence she came, and whither she was bound. And when she had told him the cause of her flight, she was surprised by the angel's command to return to her mistress, and patiently to submit to her vexations. This was not intended as a retaliation for her overbearing conduct which had caused so much discord; but as an admonition, that she owed all her happiness to her connection with Abraham's house; that for his sake only, she was favoured with the great promises in store for her descendants; and that it was, therefore, more glorious for her to be a neglected servant in the patriarch's house, than a free woman in the country of superstition to which she was about to return. Thus the assurance given to Abraham: "be a blessing" (xii. 2), was already twice fulfilled, once in Lot, and now in Hagar.—Then the angel opened to her views a future which filled her at once with rapture and amazement. He announced it in measured solemnity; and passed from a comprehensive and general prospect to a detailed and even graphic description. After having promised her an innumerable progeny through a son whom she should

fled from her.—7. And the angel of the Lord found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain on the way to Shur. 8. And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence didst thou come? and whither wilt thou go? And she said, I flee from my mistress Sarai. 9. And the angel of the Lord said to her, Return to thy mistress, and humble thyself under her hands. 10. And the angel of

call Ishmael, he continued: "And he will be a wild ass of a man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell before all his brethren." The character of the Ishmaelites, or the Bedouins, could not be described more aptly or more powerfully. Against them alone, time seems to have no sickle, and the conqueror's sword no edge. They have defied the softening influence of civilization, and mocked the attacks of the invader. Ungovernable and roaming, obeying no law but their spirit of adventure, regarding all mankind as their enemies, whom they must either attack with their spears, or elude with their faithful steeds, and cherishing their deserts as heartily as they despise the constraint of towns and communities: the Bedouins are the outlaws among the nations. Plunder is legitimate gain, and daring robbery is praised as valour. Liberty is the element which the Arab breathes; and if he were thrown into servitude, he would either break the yoke, or perish in the attempt. He cannot, indeed, be better compared than with a wild ass. This indomitable animal, which defies the swiftness of the swiftest horse, delights in its native deserts, easily satisfied with the scanty food furnished by those inhospitable regions. It seems to revel in independence; free from the master's pressing voice, it scorns the tumult of the town, and roves on the parched mountain sides in search of grass and herbs. Although in the zones it generally inhabits, water seems a vital condition, the wild ass can long exist without it; and its marvellous power of enduring hunger and thirst, explains its preservation in its arid and cheerless abodes. But if, by chance, it meets with plentiful food, it eagerly seizes it, and sates its whole desire. It surpasses, in animation, in the proportions of its structure, and in velocity, by far even the common Oriental ass; it resembles the horse in gracefulness; it bears an arched neck with a fierce pride; has a dark, vertical mane, prolonged in a stripe to the tuft of the tail, whilst its smooth skin is generally of a silvery colour, with broad patches of bright bay on the thigh, shoulder, and neck; it is gregarious, and one male frequently leads a whole troop of females. It is still found in many steppes from the Caspian Sea eastward to China, and southward to India, and occurred formerly also in Syria and Asia Minor. It was, and is still, hunted as game, and its flesh is highly valued by the Orientals as a peculiar delicacy, though Europeans have pronounced a very different opinion. With such animals are the Bedouins pointedly compared; to the latter may be properly applied the words in Job: "Who hath sent out the wild ass free? or who has loosed the bands of the wild ass? Whose house I have made the wilderness, and the barren land its dwellings" (xxxix. 5, 6). They may be hunted like game, but they cannot be caught; their wants are few; they neither covet wealth, nor tempt the conqueror's avarice; and the waste tracts shunned by other nations, are their terrestrial paradise.—"In the desert, everybody is everybody's enemy," is their proverbial saying; and they express, therefore, only in other words the sense of our text: "his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him." Their love of liberty is frequently carried to the utmost pitch of unbridled ferocity;

the Lord said to her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude. 11. And the angel of the Lord said to her, Behold, thou *art* with child, and wilt bear a son, and thou shalt call his name Ishmael; because the Lord hath heard thy affliction. 12. And he will be a wild ass of a man; his hand *will be* against

they seek danger for its own sake; they delight in the excitement of combat and pursuit; and even among themselves, sanguinary feuds are often carried on during centuries; the fearful custom of avenging of blood has a decided influence upon their characters; it renders them suspicious and vindictive; it teaches them cunning and treachery; and the cruelty and bloodthirstiness which it engenders, arm friend against friend, and relative against relative. Thus the prediction of our text has also its sad application; the Bedouin's hand is uplifted not only against the unwary pilgrim who happens to traverse his deserts, but against the descendants of his own tribes, and against those who speak his own tongue.

The proper abodes of the Ishmaelites were the districts of Arabia deserta, which are at present called *Badiah*. They were, therefore, bounded in the east by Babylonia and the Euphrates, extended in the north to Syria, spread in the west to Coelesyria and Palestine, and in the south indefinitely into the peninsula of Arabia proper. They lived, therefore, regularly indeed "to the east" of their Abrahamic brethren; but they extended their predatory excursions to the borders of all contiguous countries; their erratic mode of life gave them the character of ubiquity; they wandered wherever their wild spirits incited them; and thus they might be said to be always "before their brethren"; they restlessly strayed through the greater part of Arabia Petræa and reached not unfrequently even the borders of Egypt. The Bedouins are nomads and live in tents, and are therefore, by ancient geographers, called Scenitae. They were early divided into twelve chief tribes, each presided over by a Sheikh or Emir, and the centres of their dwellings were the wells which they dug or the halting-places which they appointed. But the prophetic promise of the text has been realized far beyond its immediate tenour. The chief importance of the Ishmaelites commenced only when the kindred nations had either been expelled or extirpated; they became powerful and formidable under the name of Saracens; they marched out to curb the world under their dominion, and to force the nations to their faith; they inundated Persia, the districts east of the Caspian Sea, and India; they carried their victorious arms into Syria and Egypt and the interior of Africa; they occupied Spain and Portugal, Sicily and Sardinia, and "have beyond their native tracts ascended more than a hundred thrones." But on the other hand, no hero succeeded in mastering them in their own deserts. Although they sent voluntary presents of incense to the great king of Persia, as they also sent presents of cattle to Jehoshaphat, king of Judah; they were never subjected to the Persian empire; they are expressly mentioned as independent allies; nor had the Asyrian and Babylonian kings more than transitory power over small portions of their tribes; here the ambition of Alexander the Great and of his successors experienced an insuperable check; a Roman expedition in the time of Augustus totally failed; and the later conquests of the Romans, in the year 105 of the present era, under Cornelius Palma, when Bostra, one degree south of Damascus, was made the northern capital of the province of Arabia extending to the Red Sea, were unable either to bend the independence of the inhabitants or to exercise any influence over their manners. Modern accounts, both abund-

every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell before all his brethren.—13. And she called the name of the Lord who spoke to her, Thou art the God of seeing: for she said, Do I even still see [live] after seeing [God]? 14. Therefore the well was called Beer-

ant and delightful, have shown that the Bedouins have remained essentially unaltered since the times of the Hebrews and the Greeks. In bodily form they are spare but athletic; in temper, grave but social; in habits, active and enduring; in strength, almost inexhaustible. Every addition to our knowledge concerning Arabia and its inhabitants, confirms more strongly the Biblical statements, that the Arabs though warlike and restless carried on commerce with their cattle which they sent to the neighbouring countries; and that they were engaged in a regular and active trade between Syria, Babylonia, and Egypt; but that they were more formidably known by the sudden invasions with which they surprised and terrified the adjoining nations. However, if it served their interests, they enlisted also in foreign armies; some tribes fought, both as foot-soldiers and horsemen, in the legions of the Syrian kings, and sided with them in their protracted war against the Jews; and they had spread beyond Damascus and the frontiers of Palestine, when they were repelled under king Alexander, the Maccabee.

We have, in these remarks, alluded to the Arabians of the desert only, without referring to those of Arabia Petræa and Arabia Felix; this limitation is prescribed to us not only by our text, but by the distinction upon which the Arabians themselves insist with regard to their population. For they strictly separate the descendants of Joktan, whom they call Kachtan, from the progeny of Ishmael; the former are called by them the *pure* Arabs (or Arab-el-Araba), while the latter are designated, with a certain contempt, the *mixed* or *admitted* Arabs (Mostarabi), because Ishmael's mother, Hagar, was of Egyptian descent; and in this distinction, we may find the germ of the later division into the chief southern tribe of the Himyari, and of the principal northern race of the Koreish to which Mohammed belonged; although the later Mohammedan fictions, suggested by national and religious pride, have contributed to render the ethnographic researches on Arabia intricate and difficult.

13—16. The confidence and distinctness with which the assurances were expressed, were to Hagar a convincing proof, that they had been uttered by a superhuman being; the misery to which her flight had exposed her, had proved a school of correction for her overbearing character; and she confided in the promises she had just received. Joy and fear, trembling and gratitude, struggled in her heart. She believed she had seen that eternal Being whom, according to a general notion of antiquity, no mortal can behold without forfeiting his life; yet she was not only uninjured, but had received the pledge that she should become the parent of mighty tribes. She exclaimed, therefore, with mingled feelings of exultation and submission: "Thou art the God of seeing; for she said, Do I even still see after seeing"? that is, Thou art to me a God whom I saw unpunished; for, although I saw Thee, I still live and see the light of the day.—The *angel* proves to be God Himself; this is not unfrequently the case, and has been explained elsewhere (see note on Exod. iii. 4). The fountain at which this vision took place, was, therefore, called "the well of seeing *God* and living"; it was situated south of Kadesh, and between this town and Bered, which latter place can, however, no more be identified. —Hagar returned into the house of Abraham, to whom she communicated

lahai-roi [the well of seeing *God* and living]; behold, *it is* between Kadesh and Bered. 15. And Hagar bore to Abram a son: and Abram called his son's name, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. 16. And Abram *was* eighty-six years old, when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram.

the Divine apparition; here the prophecy of the angel was realized; she bore a son, who was called Ishmael; but our text states with a certain distinctness, that she bore this son to Abraham, and that Abraham gave him the name Ishmael. The patriarch believed, as we have observed, that the son of Hagar was the promised and long desired offspring through whom he was to be a blessing to later generations: he was, therefore, anxious to mark him as *his* son; and he did this by giving him a name particularly adapted to the circumstances; for it may be either understood, "God has heard Hagar's affliction" (ver. 11), or "God has heard Abraham's wish and prayer."

CHAPTER XVII.

SUMMARY.—God repeated to Abraham the former promises regarding a numerous progeny and their ultimate conquest of Canaan; concluded a covenant with him, and appointed as its sign the rite of circumcision, to be performed on Abraham, his son Ishmael, and all his male servants, and in all future times on every son on the eighth day from his birth. He further changed the names of Abram and Sarai into Abraham and Sarah; and assured the patriarch that his race would be propagated through a son to be born by Sarah. When Abraham, deeming this hope improbable, considering his own age and that of his wife, entreated God that Ishmael only might live, the pledge was renewed to him that the son of Hagar should be distinguished by worldly power, while the offspring of Sarah would be the heir of the spiritual covenant. Abraham performed the circumcision in accordance with the Divine commands. He was at that time ninety-nine, and his son Ishmael thirteen years old.

1. And when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said to him, I *am* the Almighty God; walk before Me, and be perfect. 2. And

1—9. Three times had God appeared to Abraham in Canaan, not merely to repeat but to enlarge His promises. At first, a brief and simple assurance was deemed sufficient (xii. 7); then the progeny of Abraham was with emphasis compared with the dust of the earth (xiii. 16); and at last with the stars of heaven (xv. 5). A solemn sign accompanied the third vision; it was given under the form, and received the name, of a covenant. God guaranteed His promises unconditionally, since they were the reward of Abraham's faith; He enforced no corresponding duty on the part of the patriarch; He performed a pure act of mercy. But undeserved gifts may appear both incompatible with the justice of God and dangerous to the morality of man. It was, therefore, necessary to impose upon the favoured individuals adequate obligations, and to exact from them duties tending to prove their superior merit: it was necessary to conclude a strict covenant. Now, the promises hitherto clearly made to Abraham's race itself were a vast increase and the possession of a fertile land. But both are worldly boons, neither constituting nor securing true greatness. More powerful empires have risen and disappeared without enjoying

I will make My covenant between Me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. 3. And Abram fell on his face: and God spoke to him, saying, 4. As for Me, behold, My covenant *is* with thee, and thou shalt be a father of a multitude of nations. 5. And thy name shall no more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of a multitude of nations have I made thee. 6. And I shall make thee exceedingly fruitful, and I shall make nations of thee, and kings shall issue from thee. 7. And I shall establish My covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee. 8. And I shall give to thee and to thy seed after thee the land wherein thou sojournest as a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I

or spreading happiness. They prospered, but were not blessed, and in their splendour was hidden the germ of their destruction. Individuals also may abound in temporal advantages, but their souls may be languid and their hearts may be withering; for giddy mirth is not joy, and inactive torpor is not harmony of mind. Property may, to a certain degree, be a *condition* of felicity, but it is no more; all the rest must be done by man himself; the former is the gift of Providence, the latter depends on human excellence and virtue;—and therefore the former was promised to Abraham unconditionally, while the latter was made dependent on a severe covenant which as it entailed numerous and difficult duties could alone secure true and lasting happiness. We have, therefore, arrived at a new momentous era in Abraham's life. He rises from a servant into a covenantee of God, and from an instrument into a free agent; he is taught the true means and the only end of happiness. From these considerations alone, our passage can be fully understood. God announces Himself here for the first time as the Almighty, the all-powerful Lord, whose awful attributes demand a severe government. No longer satisfied with a passive faith, He exhorts Abraham "to walk before Him and to be perfect." The patriarch, overpowered by these majestic manifestations, "fell on his face" in veneration and submission (ver. 3). The promises of God are no more limited to a progeny of kings and mighty tribes (ver. 6), or to the perpetual occupation of the land of his sojourn (ver. 8), but they extend to the glorious assurance that He will everlastingly *be a God to him and to his seed after him* (ver. 7). And in order, in the clearest and concisest manner, to indicate the commencement of a new era, distinctly to separate the past from the future, and to show that another and a higher element was added to the life of the patriarch; his name was changed. This significant alteration was delayed to the moment when the existence of Abraham was raised from the sphere of material to that of spiritual blessings, when he received the first religious injunction, and entered into a direct and internal alliance with God. It is a Biblical maxim, in harmony with the doctrine of Free Will, that God has spontaneously limited His omnipotence in not interfering with the piety and impiety of man (Deut. v. 26); in this respect man has unrestricted scope and option; he is the

shall be their God. 9. And God said to Abraham, But as for thee, thou shalt keep My covenant, thou and thy seed after thee in their generations.—10. This *is* My covenant

responsible agent of his destinies. From the moment, therefore, that Abraham entered the covenant, he and his seed commenced the period of maturity; happiness and misery were in their own hands.

10—14. Circumcision was instituted as the *sign* of the covenant between God and Abraham. It is impossible to arrive at a clear idea of this remarkable rite, and of its true meaning in the Mosaic system, without pursuing its *origin* and *history* more clearly than is generally done. We distinguish four chief periods.

1. Circumcision seems to have been first practised by the Ethiopians and other nations of southern Africa. Herodotus even, whose tendency it was to derive most of the ancient institutions from the Egyptians, and who had made careful enquiries about the matter, doubted, whether to ascribe the origin of that custom to the Ethiopians or the Egyptians. But it was, from very ancient times, spread to the south and west, far beyond the boundaries of Meroe; it was, among some nations, performed on both sexes, as is still the case among the Abyssinian Christians; it prevailed among the tribes of the Troglodytes, one of which, the Kolobi, like the Kreophagi, extended it to perfect mutilation; it is in use among the Kafir nations of South Africa, the tribes of Kosa or Amakosa, forming a considerable portion of the native population of Africa; and it has been discovered in many southern islands of the Indian Seas and the Pacific Ocean. The question arises, what was the origin of this singular custom? It must evidently have a general cause, inherent either in the human mind, or in the human frame, since it was in use among so different nations, possessing no mutual intercourse. Now, a *religious* motive seems to be out of the question; for some of the nations alluded to are not only strangers to all religious ceremonies, but destitute of all moral feelings. The Troglodytes, for instance, called the cattle, and not father and mother, their parents, since, they say, the former satisfy their wants; they killed not only the sick and invalid, but all persons above 60 years, because they would be burdensome to them on their nomadic wanderings; both the women and children belonged to all in common, and they disposed of their dead in a revolting manner. There is, therefore, scarcely a doubt that in those southern countries the rite of circumcision was introduced from a *physical* cause. It was not only a matter of expediency, but, in some cases, of necessity. Philo distinctly observes, that it prevents the painful and often incurable disease of carbuncle; it, further, obviates some fearful disorders; modern travellers testify, that it precludes great physical inconvenience among the Bushmen; and the Christian missionaries who exerted themselves for its abolition in Abyssinia, were, by the dangerous physical consequences, compelled to desist from their plans. If we hereto add, that among nearly all those tribes, the operation is performed not in infancy, but at the approach of puberty, it becomes evident that the burning temperature of their southern climes, in many cases combined with a peculiar bodily structure of those races, gave rise to the custom of circumcision.

2. From the south, it spread northward into Egypt. Many parts of this country were colonized by emigrants from Ethiopia; and, thus, many primitive customs of the south were transplanted into the land of the Pharaohs. The intercourse with Ethiopia was both constant and animated. Now, the same complaints to which we have referred as frequent in Ethiopia, may, in many instances, have appeared in Egypt also; and circumcision may, therefore, as a matter of precaution, have been gradually adopted by all Egyptians. But it recommended itself to this people from another consideration

which you shall keep between Me and you and thy seed after thee: Circumcise every male child among you. 11. And you shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin;

also, in their views of the highest importance: that of cleanliness. It is in this light that it is represented by Herodotus: "They are circumcised for the sake of cleanliness, thinking it better to be clean than handsome" (ii. 37); he mentions it in connection with many other customs adopted for the same end; for instance, that they drink from cups of brass which they scour every day; that they wear linen garments, constantly fresh washed; that the priests shave their whole body every third day, that it may harbour no vermin; and that they wash themselves in cold water twice every day, and twice every night. There is no doubt whatever, that during many centuries that rite was performed by all classes of the Egyptians, and by the whole nation. When the Israelites, after their entrance into Canaan under Joshua, and after a long neglect of the ordinance of circumcision, had conscientiously performed it, they felt that the "reproach of Egypt" was removed from them (Josh. v. 9), which could not be said had it not been universal in Egypt. The examination of the mummies; the fact that the Colchians, who were Egyptian settlers belonging to the army of Sesostris, performed the ceremony; and the accounts of Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus, Philo and Strabo, concur to prove, that circumcision was a general and national institution among the Egyptians. Now, the great authority and exceeding reputation for superior wisdom which they possessed in the ancient world, induced many nations to adopt from them, among other institutions, the practice of circumcision also. Thus, it was performed by the Arabians and Edomites, by the Ammonites and Moabites, by the Phœnicians and the Syrians about Thermodon and the river Parthenius; and in this instance, not merely blind veneration but a regard for health and cleanliness assisted in spreading the custom.

3. But it was, in the course of time, observed that many tribes and nations inhabiting the same zones, remained uncircumcised without perceptible danger or inconvenience. That rite was, for instance, never adopted by the Philistines, nor the Canaanites, nor many of the Libyan tribes, nor even some of the Arabians, as the Midianites. Hence it happened that not only the people of the Edomites neglected it, but that gradually some classes of the Egyptians omitted to perform an operation which, at the more advanced age between boyhood and youth is extremely painful; and when, in the time of the Persian and Greek dominion, the primitive institutions of Egypt were neglected or underwent important modifications, circumcision ceased to be a national custom. The priests alone preserved it as a mark of their superior purity; they used it as an additional means of shedding round their persons the mysterious halo of elevated sanctity; they insisted upon the law, that none but circumcised persons should be initiated in their mysteries, and they exacted that condition from Pythagoras when he desired to be introduced into their sect; it is even not improbable that, from the reason alluded to, they discouraged the rite among the people; in the times of Josephus, it was restricted to their caste alone, though permitted to the rest of the nation; and in the age of Origen and Jerome, it was their exclusive privilege. It was natural, that the wise men of Egypt should connect some higher religious or philosophical notions with the rite of circumcision, especially since it had become entirely their own. Now, it is well known, that a great part of the Egyptian religion consisted in the deification of the powers of nature, and especially of generation; this idea is chiefly represented by their two principal deities, Osiris and Isis, who presided both over fertility and fruitfulness; in Egypt, a chief part of the festival of

and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you. 12. And every male child, when eight days old, shall

Bacchus was the public procession of the phallus, performed in an obscene manner amidst the wild songs of women; and the same rites in honour of Bacchus were from Egypt introduced into Greece. It was further, generally believed, that circumcision enhances prolificness; and the Egyptians ascribed their increasing population, in a great measure, to the same custom, although it was, besides, considered to be attributable to the purity of the air, and the quality of the water of the Nile. It seems evident, therefore, that the Egyptian priests connected circumcision with the very centre of their religion; that they regarded it as a part of the system by which they endeavoured to penetrate into the secret working of nature; and that, by dedicating the prepuce to their gods, they ascribed to them the wonderful powers of generation.

4. Among the nations which derived the custom of circumcision from the Egyptians, were undoubtedly the Hebrews. We have not only the testimony of Herodotus, that "the Syrians in Palestine" themselves avow this fact (ii. 104), but the indirect consent of the Bible itself in that passage of Joshua (v. 9), above cited for another purpose; the Egyptians could scarcely have regarded the uncircumcised Israelites with contempt and reproach, if they had themselves only borrowed that rite from them. But more forcible than all inferences, the national character of the Egyptians, their pride and aversion to all foreigners and foreign customs, exclude the supposition, that they should have adopted circumcision from a detested race of nomads, or, as some scholars assert, from the Phœnicians, among whom it seems to have been a sign of consecration to Saturn. Josephus himself tacitly allows to the Egyptians the priority with regard to that practice, and taunts the Egyptian Apion for having neglected a custom which it was a peculiar boast of his native country to have spread among many other nations (C. Ap., ii. 14).

But did Mosaism blindly adopt a heathen ceremony? And here we have arrived at the culminating point of this deduction. In no other institution, perhaps, do we see with greater force and distinctness that fundamental principle which pervades the whole legislative part of the Old Testament, and without regard to which it will ever be impossible to comprehend its full spiritual meaning, and to balance its exact historical value. We have, both in our Commentary on Exodus, and in the preceding portions of Genesis, made it our special task to show that almost every religious ceremony, perhaps with the only exception of the Sabbath, was based upon a prevailing eastern custom or tradition; but that these common observances or notions were, by Mosaism, not only divested of their base and superstitious elements, but that they were converted into new doctrines, and were used as vehicles of religious ideas borrowed, in their comprehensiveness and purity, from no other people, but absolutely original in the Hebrew nation; that, just in this prudent accommodation to traditionary practices, the external success of the new religion was secured, while the transformation of rotten and idolatrous institutions into laws of indestructible vitality, constitutes its indisputable claim to originality, and commands the admiration of all ages. Circumcision must, therefore, be viewed in the same light as the sacrifices and the ordinance regarding the "red cow," as the phylacteries and fringes (zizith), as the dietary laws and the kid which is not to be seethed in its mother's milk, or, in a word, as nearly all ceremonial precepts. We have traced the practice of circumcision through its first three stages, as a sanitary measure, as promoting cleanliness, and as a cosmic rite connected with the secrets of propagation, and standing in the service of religion. Now, what were the new ideas associated by Mosaism with that ancient custom? We cannot repress our conviction, that the legislator would scarce-

be circumcised among you in your generations; he who is born in the house or bought with money, of any stranger

ly have retained it, had he not regarded it either as a physical or religious *necessity*, especially as, in all other cases, he forbids with abhorrence every mutilation of the body, which is holy because framed by God; the circumstances, that he neglected the circumcision of his own son, and allowed it to be disregarded by the Israelites during the forty years of their wanderings, may be historical facts indicating his personal views regarding this rite. Nor were, indeed, the three reasons just mentioned sufficient to demand, or even to permit, its preservation. A medical necessity did not exist, since neither the Philistines, nor the Canaanites who inhabited Palestine, nor the Mesopotamians, felt any inducement to adopt it; cleanliness, which is, at present, by most Biblical scholars pertinaciously assigned as its only motive, was viewed very differently among the Egyptians and the Hebrews; for, whilst the former shaved not only head and beard but the whole body, the latter were careful in the preservation of their hair; and fruitfulness was so little deemed dependent on circumcision, that Abraham begat Ishmael thirteen years before he performed that rite, whilst female rescision was never introduced among the Hebrews, though it was customary among the Arabs, the Abyssinians, and some other African tribes. Circumcision, further, cannot simply represent the idea connected with it by the Egyptian priests, namely, that it was a sign of initiation into a holy community; for it was not only introduced but generally practised among the Hebrews when it was still a national custom in Egypt, and not yet restricted to the caste of the priests. However, since circumcision was borrowed from the Egyptians, its meaning must stand in some internal and organic connection with that attributed to it by the latter. This is, indeed, the case; but the connection is not one of imitation, but of *direct opposition*. It concerns, in both religions, the kernel and centre of faith; and, for this reason, the difference of the two systems is distinctly reflected by the difference with which it was viewed among both nations. The Egyptians regarded nature as the all-powerful parent who produces from her hidden womb everything that grows and lives; while the Hebrew books begin with representing God not only as the Creator of heaven and earth, but as the origin of everything which adorns and fills either. But the former considered man also as a part of nature, or as a cosmic being; and therefore the organ of generation was holy, because manifesting a part of the inexplicable power of production; and Osiris was both the god of fertility and prolificness. These notions were not peculiar to the Egyptians alone; they recur wherever nature is deified; they are represented by Baal and Astarte, by Bel and Mylitta; and they led, in some instances, to the usage of castration, as among the Galli, the priests of Cybele, the mother of the gods. These pernicious and thoroughly idolatrous ideas were to be opposed and eradicated by the Hebrew institution of circumcision. It teaches that, like every human faculty the power of generation proceeds from God, and stands under His immediate control; He might grant and withhold it; to *Him* man owes his children; they are due neither to himself nor to the powers of nature. The higher the pride was with which the Israelites were accustomed to regard a numerous progeny, the greater was necessity to enforce the feeling of humility by showing the entire dependence of man upon the mercy of God both in begetting descendants and in preserving them. Although Abraham was physically not incapable of producing children, as the birth of Ishmael proved, yet Sarah did not for many years bless him with a progeny, thus affording proof that not the mere power of generation, but the grace of God secures offspring. The pride which Prometheus felt in shaping a human being was among many ancient nations shared by every father; and even the first mother, Eve,

who *is* not of thy seed. 13. He who is born in thy house, and he who is bought with thy money, must be circumcised: and My covenant shall be on your flesh for an

could not suppress a similar outburst of exultation when she had born her first son: "I have acquired a man with God" (iv. 1). By thus connecting the rite of circumcision with the purest ideas of resignation and piety, Mosaism laid a sure foundation for moral conduct; licentiousness, stimulated by the fiery temperament of the Oriental, was checked; the passions were restrained; and if sinful desires or vicious imaginations arose within him, he was reminded by the covenant sealed on his flesh that he had promised holiness of life and innocence of the heart. Hence the word "uncircumcised" was in the Hebrew language generally used in a purely figurative sense; and phrases like "uncircumcised of heart" or "of ear," prove that the rite here discussed was indeed conceived as a type of some of those inward virtues which constitute the chief end of religion. The blood of circumcision confirmed the personal covenant; hence the boy was, on the day when that rite was performed, called "a bridegroom of blood" (Exod. iv. 25); and the resected foreskin which was considered unclean, typified both the abnegation of lasciviousness, and, like the offering of the firstlings, the acknowledgment of God's sovereignty. Thus a custom of the basest sensuality was converted into a rite of morality; worship of nature into reverence of God; and hierarchy into theocracy. Therefore, to sum up our opinion on circumcision, Mosaism was compelled to retain it on account of the ignominy with which its neglect was regarded by neighbouring nations, and, in consequence, by the Hebrews themselves; but it *reformed* it from a physical expedient or superstitious rite into a symbol of holiness and of alliance between God and man.

From these considerations alone all the precepts regarding circumcision receive their true light. It was to be performed on the eighth day, or after *seven complete* days, because every action by which man rises to God and sanctifies himself is connected with that sacred number; it took place, therefore, at the earliest period of the child's existence, when first he was strong enough to endure the pain, because the whole life should, from its beginning, be devoted to God, whilst almost all the other nations practised it at a much later age (except some tribes of the Arabs, who postpone it only till after teething); it was not only to be performed on the descendants of Abraham, but upon all those servants and strangers who wished to participate in their religious privileges (see on Exod. xii. 43—49), because it represented that spiritual connection with God, without which sacred observances are a profanation; and its neglect was threatened with extirpation, because it implies a treacherous breach of the covenant.—It must further be observed that circumcision, *as here commanded to Abraham*, exceeds in scope and meaning by far even its ordinary importance. For it is here not merely a *personal* sign for the patriarch; but it implies also the *national* covenant with Israel, since it is connected with the promises regarding the great people which was to descend from him; and it includes even that prophetic future, when the patriarch will be a *universal* blessing to all nations; for the spiritual covenant which it symbolises reaches to unnumbered generations; it is the starting-point of an endless career of love and holiness.—From this point of view we may explain the extensiveness with which circumcision is here enjoined, although it was later, *in the Law*, materially restricted. It is to be performed on *every* slave that is born in the house or bought with money, belonging to whatever foreign nation (vers. 12, 13); whereas it was later left to the option of the servants and the strangers whether they wished to submit to the rite or not (Exod.

everlasting covenant. 14. And the uncircumcised male who is not circumcised on the flesh of his foreskin, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he has destroyed

xii. 43—49). Here the *ideal* future is regarded, when there will be no distinction between "a stranger of justice" and "a stranger of the gate," but when all will form one holy community; whereas the Law necessarily took regard of existing circumstances, which though not hopeless were far from guaranteeing fulfilment.

We conclude with a few miscellaneous remarks. Originally circumcision was performed with a stone knife, to prevent inflammation (see note on Exod. iv. 25), but at present it is safely done with a steel knife, except on boys who die before the eighth day from their birth, when the ancient custom is followed, as is the case in all instances among the Abyssinian Christians.—Sons of Hebrew mothers and heathen fathers were admitted, but not compelled, to circumcision.—The operation was generally performed by the father himself, but any Israelite was allowed to act in his stead; heathens alone were excluded; in cases of emergency women even were admitted. But as practice is required to prevent danger, pious persons devoted themselves to that office which they exercised gratuitously, finding their reward in the consciousness of having introduced the children into the holy covenant. — The boy generally received his name on the day of circumcision. And hence we may derive another collateral reason why Abraham's name was changed when that ceremony was commanded to him.—There is no historical difficulty in the supposition that circumcision was already introduced in Abraham's time, though it can scarcely be doubted that it received its deeper and internal development only since the diffusion of Mosaism; for it was long generally neglected, and Joshua first carried it out in its full extent (Josh. v. 2—9); but from that period it seems, on the whole, to have been faithfully observed; the epithet "uncircumcised" was deemed the greatest insult and ignominy; and the strictures of the prophets are not directed against its omission, but against "the uncircumcised circumcised people" who observe the external ritual but are nevertheless "uncircumcised in heart"; and in this sense, even circumcised nations seem sometimes to have been simply called "uncircumcised ones," a proof how clearly the internal purity was regarded as the only aim of this rite. Among the Israelites, therefore, circumcision took, in the course of time, deeper root, while it gradually fell into disuse among the Egyptian people; a natural consequence of the fact proved above, that the one regarded it as a matter of religion, the others of expediency.—Although it was by no means an exclusive characteristic of the Israelites, since they shared it with many other nations, and though it was not even original among them, its *sacredness* was, indeed, peculiar almost to them alone; and hence heathen conquerors, as Antiochus Epiphanes and other enemies, often rigorously interdicted it as one of the surest means of weakening among them the faith of their ancestors; but they never succeeded; it was practised in secret till they were again permitted to perform it without restriction. On the other hand, the Israelites never favoured proselytism; they especially allowed the strangers free choice with regard to circumcision; and the conduct of later fanatics who forced subjugated nations, as the Idumæans and Ituræans, to submit to it against their will, met with the severest censure on the part of the more enlightened portions of the community. —In the Christian church it was, after serious controversy between the apostles, remitted to the *heathens* who embraced the new doctrines, "in order not to lay upon them greater burdens than the necessary things" (Acts xv. 28; comp. xvi. 1—3); and later only exemption was tacitly ex-

My covenant.—15. And God said to Abraham, Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah *shall* her name *be*. 16. And I shall bless her, and shall also give thee a son of her: and I shall bless her, and she shall be *a mother* of nations; kings of people shall be of her. 17. And Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and thought in his heart, Shall *a child* be born to one who is a hundred years old? and shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear? 18. And Abraham said to God, O that Ishmael might live before thee! 19. And God said, Indeed, Sarah thy wife will bear thee a son; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I shall establish My covenant with

tended to Christians of Jewish descent (comp. Acts xxi. 20—25; Rom. iv. 9—13; Phil. iii. 3—5).—Through the Mohammedans, circumcision was spread among the Persians, Turks, and Indians, and is in many parts performed on both sexes. Travellers inform us that it was even practised in Otahiti and among some American tribes.

15—22. In all promises hitherto made to Abraham, Sarah had never been mentioned; and though the patriarch had, at first, naturally expected, that the blessings would be realized through her, he resigned that hope on Ishmael's birth, which, in fact, seemed to imply the fulfilment of the exact Divine assurances. But this would neither have caused perfect happiness to the patriarch, nor would it have been fully in harmony with the Divine scheme. The mother of the great nation which was to teach His name and to propagate His glory, could not be a foreign bond-maid: in the eyes of the later Hebrews, such an alliance was an abomination, and they would have blushed to acknowledge an ancestry with which they would have been perpetually taunted by their enemies. Therefore, for Abraham's sake as well as for the honour of God, it was indispensable that *Sarah* should become the mother of the Hebrew nation; and after the spiritual covenant had been communicated to the patriarch, he received, as its immediate consequence, the promise of progeny through his lawful wife. For, although it was necessary to teach, by the birth of Ishmael, that fruitfulness and barrenness lie in the hands of God, it was as important to show, that the pure seed can only be begotten in purity, and that children are a true and permanent blessing only if born and reared in piety. If, therefore, the change of name was significant in Abraham, it was almost indispensable in Sarah, since with her a new epoch commenced, both in a physical and religious respect. Hence she received a name indicating that her struggles and her sorrows were passed, that she would have no longer to *contend* with her barrenness, but that she would be the mother of nations and princes, and could, therefore, henceforth be herself regarded as *a queen*. Before this time, the names of the husband and the wife were widely different: while the former had always been "*a father* of elevation," the latter was humbled by her fruitless efforts against the curse of *sterility*. But now, when the indestructible foundation for a great future was to be laid, their names became nearly synonymous; "the father of a great multitude" is equivalent to the "mother of nations and of kings of a great people."—But Abraham, who had but just evinced his pious reverence for God (ver. 3), now, at this unexpected renewal of the promise, could not suppress the doubt arising in his mind; he viewed the prospect from its natural pro-

him for an everlasting covenant, with his seed after him. 20. And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee; behold, I have blessed him, and I shall make him fruitful, and shall multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes will he beget, and I shall make him a great nation. 21. But My covenant I shall establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to thee at this season in the next year. 22. And He ceased to speak to him, and God went up from Abraham.—23. And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all who were born in his house, and all who were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house; and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin on the same day, as God

bability; he acted again as a frail mortal; he smiled at the idea of progeny at his own and Sarah's old age; and he uttered the prayer, that Ishmael might only live and walk in the ways of God; he was contented with the son of Hagar, if he could but obtain the certainty that this son would, by his virtuous conduct, be worthy to be the ancestor of blessed nations and kings. Abraham himself seems to have felt, that his doubt was unjustifiable; for he dared not to express it aloud; it was a pusillanimous *thought* which arose in his *heart*; it was a tribute which the Divine aspirations within him paid to human weakness.—The answer returned by God to Abraham's prayer regarding Ishmael, was as decided as it was characteristic. The son of Hagar should, indeed, be blessed; but with the blessings of this world; he should grow into a numerous and powerful nation; he should spread over wide territories; twelve princes should descend from him (xxv. 12—16); and the dread of his name should inspire respect and fear. But with the son of Sarah, God would "establish His covenant for ever"; by him should Abraham's seed be called (xxi. 12); he should be blessed with the benedictions of faith and truth; his greatest glory would not consist in earthly splendour, or conquest, or a mighty name; but in that true and unceasing happiness which knowledge and religion yield, which is above the vicissitudes of fortune, and finds consolation and hope in the serenity of an exalted mind. The basis on which the future salvation of mankind was to be erected, was not the transitory and cold glitter of worldly greatness, but the eternal sunshine of truth.

23—27. The great importance of the "sign of the covenant" induced the historian to record the execution of the Divine command with emphatic copiousness. As the servants purchased from foreign nations were also subjected to circumcision, it may be supposed that he regarded this custom to have spread, through them and their descendants, among the various tribes to which they belonged; and it is, perhaps, in this way that he accounted for its occurrence among nations which had nothing else in common with the Hebrews; but it is certain, that he intended to explain the usage of the Arabians, who circumcise their males in the thirteenth year, by the circumstance that Ishmael had then attained that age. — Although, in the time of the Hebrew commonwealth, it was left to the option of the strangers whether they would submit to circumcision or not, the patriarch's example seems designed to impress the advisability of its universal adoption by all those who shared with the Hebrews the abodes in Canaan. The aim of the Mosaic law was not only to teach monotheism, but practically to introduce it into the life of the Israelites; every pernicious example was, therefore, to be removed; even "the stran-

had said to him. 24. And Abraham *was* ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised on the flesh of his foreskin. 25. And Ishmael his son *was* thirteen years old when he was circumcised on the flesh of his foreskin. 26. On the same day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son. 27. And all the men of his house, born in the house and bought with money of the stranger, were circumcised with him.

gers of the gate" were obliged to observe the "seven laws of Noah," among which are idolatry, murder, blasphemy and incest; and although they enjoyed some social and legal advantages, they were excluded from all spiritual privileges, which were secured only by entering the covenant through circumcision. As the house of Abraham formed one harmonious family, so should the "house of Israel" be united by the twofold bond of sacred duties and sacred rights. The isolation of the Hebrews proceeded not, like that of the Egyptians, from an unsociable and suspicious disposition, but from an anxious regard to the highest boons of man.

CHAPTER XVIII.

SUMMARY.—God and three angels appeared to Abraham, chiefly to renew to Sarah also the promises before made to the patriarch alone. The angels were hospitably received and treated. The announcement that she would, within a year, bear a son, was made to Sarah, who heard it with an incredulous doubt; but God pointed to His omnipotence, which overrules nature itself. The angels proceeded towards Sodom; while God communicated to Abraham his intention of destroying that town and the whole district, on account of the extreme wickedness of the inhabitants. The patriarch interceded for them with persevering fervour, and obtained from God the promise that He would spare the towns if but ten righteous men were found in them.

1. And the Lord appeared to him in the oak-grove of Mamre: and he was sitting *in* the tent door in the heat of the day. 2. And he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, be-

1—16. Sarah had but very gradually been included in the Divine promises; and it was only at the last great vision, at the conclusion of the covenant, that her name was for the first time connected with them. But she had herself not yet been favoured with any personal assurance from the Deity; it is, therefore, the immediate end of the following beautiful narrative to record that she had indeed been graced by a distinction, which belonged to her, both as the inseparable partner of the patriarch's destinies, and as the mother of the holy people. Hence this apparition is not connected with any of those awful circumstances which generally attend such manifestations; it is a familiar and a domestic meeting, imbued with all the charms of idyllical tranquillity. God appeared to Abraham whilst the latter was seeking shelter from the burning rays of the meridian sun under the shady oaks of Mamre (ver. 1). Accustomed to such gracious proofs of Divine love, the patriarch recognised at once the Judge of the whole earth; he felt the presence of the Eternal Spirit. But at the same moment he observed three figures in human form standing before him; and after having quickly of-

hold, three men stood by him: and when he saw *them*, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed down to the ground.—3. And he said, Lord, if, I pray Thee, I have found favour in Thy sight, pass not, I pray Thee, by Thy servant.—4. Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and recline under the tree: 5. And

fered them his civilities, he hastened to address God, and to entreat Him not to pass by him without again making him participant of His glory (vers. 2, 3). He then turned to the three strangers, and urged them to recruit themselves under the shadow of the trees from the fatigues of their journey, and to partake of the refreshments he might be able to offer. The men consented (vers. 4, 5). The patriarch, eager to fulfil the sacred duties of hospitality, ordered Sarah to prepare quickly cakes of the finest flour; he selected himself from his folds a calf "tender and good," and commanded to dress it without delay. Cream and milk were added to the feast, which was spread under a tree before the tent, and at which the great emir himself served. The three men sat down and partook of the food, while the spirit of God hovered among the assembly (vers. 6—8). But these guests were no simple mortals; they were "messengers" of the Deity, and initiated in the design and purpose of the Divine appearance. They inquired, therefore, after Sarah, for whom particularly that special honour was intended (ver. 9). She was immediately behind them in the tent; female modesty had retained her at a distance from the strange men; but female curiosity had brought her to the very door of the tent, from where she could overhear their conversation. The glorious announcement, however, was not to be made by the messengers, but by God Himself; and He, therefore, repeated, in nearly the same terms as before, the assurance that, in the next year, at the same season, Sarah would be the mother of a son (ver. 10). It was not to be expected that Sarah, the woman, the jealous and spiteful rival of Hagar, should with greater faith than Abraham rely upon a promise apparently defying every human possibility; she felt that the freshness and bloom of her life had long faded away, and that, indeed, all the symptoms of womanly strength had disappeared: she smiled, therefore, within herself, like Abraham, who knew that he had also reached the age of infirmity and exhaustion (vers. 11, 12). But when God reiterated with enhanced emphasis the same promise; when He distinctly urged that the birth of the son was indeed not to be expected in the natural way, but was to be left to the infinite omnipotence of God, Sarah blushed at her want of faith; she was ashamed to acknowledge her doubt; she took refuge in the specious pretext, that her smile had not risen to her face, but had only lingered in her heart; forgetting that the sinful thought is equally culpable before the Divine tribunal. However, God accepted the quick repentance of Sarah; He counted it to her as faith (Heb. xi. 11, 12); and He, who is the source of truth, contented Himself with merely correcting, without censuring or punishing, her ambiguous assertion (vers. 13—15). When the repast was finished, the "men" rose to proceed towards Sodom (vers. 16, 22), where two of them arrived in the evening, in the capacity of Divine messengers or angels (xix. 1); whilst God remained still with Abraham, to communicate to him His schemes regarding the destruction of the wicked inhabitants of the district of the Jordan (vers. 17—33).

We have premised this analysis of our chapter, in order to show, in the briefest possible manner, our views regarding the extraordinary scene which it describes, and to obviate at once the various, most objectionable, and often blasphemous, in-

I will fetch a morsel of bread, and you may refresh your hearts; after *which* you may pass on: since you once passed your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said. 6. And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three seahs of fine flour, knead *it*, and make cakes. 7. And Abraham ran to the

terpretations which it has called forth. But, above all, we have thus avoided imputing to the Hebrew writer notions concerning the Deity which would bear a perfectly heathen character, and would be in direct and absolute opposition to the whole of the Biblical canon. For God cannot be included in the "three men"; He has no corporeal form, and is visible only to the mental eye; He can be compared to nothing accessible to the external senses, not even to angels; there exists no object so ethereal, no substance so fine, either in heaven or on earth, from which He has borrowed any similitude; and it is distinctly stated, that when His faithful servant, Moses, received from Him the laws of truth, he saw only His glory, but no material form whatever. It is unnecessary to dilate upon the importance of this doctrine; it is inferior to none, except the existence and unity of God; and it forms, therefore, the contents of the second of the ten commandments. How can we, therefore, suppress our astonishment, that many expositors believed even that God is here represented as really eating of the food prepared by Abraham? We do not, of course, allude to those who have, with their usual levity, eagerly seized this narrative, in order to show that Mosaism is nothing else but another form of absurd paganism; we speak of those pious and venerable men who, by their authority, provoked and almost sanctioned such perverse profanations; who taxed all their ingenuity to make the act of eating appear compatible with the attributes of God; who, like Augustin, contended that He *can* take food, although He does not *require* it; that He is like the sun, which can absorb the water without wanting it, and not like the earth, which cannot exist without it: we speak of those who, like Justin, compared the eating of God with the devouring power of the fire; and of those who, starting from the correct maxim, that God is the unlimited Lord of all matter, forgot that He Himself, in His being and His essence, is for ever separated from it; that He frames and rules it, but that it can never constitute a part of His nature or of His manifestations.—But it may be objected, that the same difficulty remains with regard to the three angels who appear in human form (xix. 1, 15), and who are clearly stated to have eaten (ver. 8). It must, however, be distinctly observed, that our knowledge concerning the nature and the office of the angels, from the earlier books of the Old Testament, is extremely limited; that there is historical evidence that the doctrines regarding these mediators between God and man were but gradually spread and developed among the Hebrews; and that, though some reminiscences of them may have remained among the descendants of Abraham from their original home in Chaldea, they received their fuller outlines only in those later periods when the notions of the Hebrews were not immaterially influenced by their contact with the Babylonians. The angels appear, throughout our section, in every respect as mortals; they wash their feet, recline beneath a tree, eat, and excite the immoral desire of the Sodomites (xix. 5): nothing, in fact, distinguishes them from human beings except the supernatural mission entrusted to them, and manifest only by their deeds, not their persons.

In order to leave no doubt on this important subject, it seems expedient briefly to sketch the notions of the Old Testament regarding the angels. Whenever God in-

herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave *it* to a young man; and he hastened to dress it. 8. And he took sour milk, and fresh milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set *it* before them: and he stood by them under the tree, and they ate.—9. And they said to him, Where *is* Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent. 10. And

tended *to manifest His power by visible acts, He sent His angels.* Thus He charged an angel to redeem the Israelites from the thraldom of Egypt; and when Elijah, exhausted by hunger, and abandoned in the desert, prayed to God, an angel appeared, fed and strengthened him. God charged an angel, suddenly to destroy the proud army of Sennacherib; now to spread, and now to check, the raging pestilence in Jerusalem. Hence all the contrasts, which sometimes seem to amount to contradictions, can be accounted for. The angels were, on the one hand, identified with those powers of nature employed by God either to terrify or to benefit mankind; and, therefore, the winds, the rain, and the flashes of lightning, are called His angels; or they are, on the other hand, regarded as a part of Divine nature itself; and, therefore, the being originally introduced as an angel of God, ultimately proves to be God Himself. An angel rescued, consoled, and advised Hagar; and commanded Abraham in Moriah to abstain from killing his son; an angel instructed Jacob in a dream concerning the increase of his flock; and addressed and exhorted Moses from the bush in Horeb: all which functions belong to God alone, and can by Him only be performed. Further, sometimes angels are seen with impunity, and sometimes they cause the death of those who behold them with their external eyes; sometimes they accept food, and sometimes they smile at the idea of mortal wants; on one occasion, they enter into familiar intercourse with man, and on another, they preserve a mysterious superiority; an angel now condescends to wrestle with Jacob, and now finds it advisable not even to reveal his wonderful name, since it expresses his incomprehensible nature. It is, further, clear from the principle above proposed, why sometimes *one* angel is introduced as comprising the whole sum of Divine omnipotence and love; and sometimes a plurality of angels representing the manifold emanations of His nature; so that they form "a camp of God," or are the connecting links between heaven and earth, ascending and descending, according to the offices assigned to them; again, why the angels possess now, all the sublime qualities of the Deity, and now, are said not to be pure in the eyes of God. Since thus the angels represent the infinite manifestations of His will and His powers, it is natural, that gradually angels of very various attributes were conceived; we have a protecting angel, and one who intercedes with God in favour of man; we have a destroying angel, as well as a host of evil angels; and since, indeed, the human mind can understand God in His visible manifestations, rather than in His unfathomable abstract attributes, we see angels hold an intermediate station between God and man: in the time of pestilence, David beheld the angel of God standing between heaven and earth, with his sword drawn over Jerusalem—and he fell down and prayed to *God* (2 Sam. xxiv. 16). God speaks to His prophets frequently through angels; even priests are called angels; and the utmost degree of human wisdom is compared to that of an angel of God. —It is evident from all this, that the Biblical views regarding the angels, in no way impair the purity of monotheism; angels are either the impersonations of God Himself in His works and deeds, or they stand under His will and control; they are divested of every independent

He said, I shall surely come again to thee at the return of *this* season; and, behold, Sarah thy wife will have a son. And Sarah heard *it* in the tent door, and she *was* behind it. 11. Now Abraham and Sarah *were* old *and* advanced in age; *and* it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. 12. Therefore Sarah laughed within herself,

power; and it is a most interesting task, which we reserve for a future occasion, to trace the analogy between these conceptions of the Hebrews and those of other nations, and to examine how far the one are indebted to the other.

But we must here at once observe, that the doctrine of the angels is of no importance in the Mosaic system; angels were adopted from the general circle of Oriental ideas; and their nature and offices were modified only so far, as strictly to harmonise with the great truths of the Old Testament. It will, therefore, not even be necessary, as it would be against the sound interpretation of the language, to understand, in our passage, the eating of the angels, as Josephus and other ancient and modern interpreters do, "that they had the appearance of persons who eat"; for, if we attempt to remove every human attribute from the nature of the angels, we totally destroy the character of this narrative. We consider the introduction of angels in the Pentateuch as belonging to the *form* of its composition, which is to be regarded in exactly the same light as all other eastern writings; and it was sufficient for us to show, that it nowhere interferes with the fundamental idea of Mosaism. Those who have attentively read our remarks on Paradise, the Fall, the Deluge, and the Dispersion, will understand the meaning and scope of this view, and will require no further exposition. But there is a peculiar and weighty reason why the visit of the angels was at all introduced in the text, besides the vision of God Himself. The holy books of most of the eastern and ancient nations are replete with visits of the gods, appearing in human form; they surprise and try the people; and enter their houses and cottages, in order to partake of all their physical enjoyments. It would be unnecessary to adduce instances, as the Indian legends and Greek mythology will easily furnish them to everybody. Now, such stories are not only derogatory, but destructive of Divine majesty; they endanger the notions regarding the most essential attributes of God; and it was, therefore, important to show that whenever God deigns to visit the house of mortals, He does it through His messengers, whose compound nature permits them to join their domestic pleasures and recreations.

The beautiful and truly Oriental picture of these verses is faithful in every detail; it has been verified by all successive travellers, and is pervaded by a glow and heartiness which touch and purify. In the favourable season the Bedouins use their tents chiefly in the evening and the night. The women alone remain there in perpetual retirement, while the men stay during the day before it, either under a projecting marquee or under a neighbouring tree, where also not unfrequently strangers are invited to rest and to share the meals. If wanderers wish to enter a tent, they stand before it till they are observed. The virtue of hospitality is one of the great redeemingqualitiesin the character of the Bedouins. Though nothing is too great, and nothing too small to tempt their rapacity, a stranger is, in their eyes, a holy person, whom they shield and honour, and treat with anxious kindness, and often dismiss with presents. They feel a happiness in finding individuals on whom to bestow their liberality; they not seldom look out for strangers; they do not withhold their last sheep or goat, even if they know that they will then themselves be exposed to want; and

saying, After I am faded away shall I have delight? and my husband *also* is old. 13. And the Lord said to Abraham, Why did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I indeed bear a child, since I am old? 14. Is anything too difficult for the Lord? At the appointed time I shall come again to thee, at the return of *this* season, and Sarah shall have a

Europeans find their importunity frequently burdensome. This virtue was, from the earliest times, invested with a solemn and religious character; the strangers stand under the immediate protection of the deity; fearful judgment is inflicted upon the impious who treacherously abandon a traveller or illtreat a guest; in the hospitable tent even deadly enmities are silenced; and the avenger of blood here spares his mortal foe. Among the Israelites the same notion prevailed; and it is a proof of the great moral importance which was attached to it, that the virtuous patriarch's example is here conspicuously placed before his descendants. Both in the New Testament and in the Talmud are the same duties enjoined with great power, and are regarded as essential parts of a holy life. The social organization of the ancient communities rendered the virtue of hospitality almost indispensable; no public inns existed to afford accommodation to travellers; the roads were difficult and unsafe; and the cities were often separated by great and dreary tracts of land. Hence we find it enforced and scrupulously practised even among the most uncivilised nations, while the Greeks especially developed it into a most affecting and beautiful custom, in which all the amiable qualities of their happy character shone forth in their full grace. But the testimonies of modern travellers regarding Bedouin hospitality are so numerous and so uniform that it would be both impossible and useless to introduce them. Even at present, the Arabians undertake journeys only if induced by commerce, religion, or necessity; but very seldom from curiosity, and scarcely ever for the pursuit of pleasure, which would be too dearly purchased by extreme inconvenience and often imminent danger. The pilgrim caravans are, therefore, preceded and followed by considerable numbers of well-armed men. The journey from Damascus to Mecca requires 45 days, and is often made with 30,000 to 40,000 camels, and sometimes with 80,000. As the only object of the host is his own satisfaction, or the performance of a religious duty, he seldom molests his guests with questions concerning their persons or the purposes of their journeys; or if his solicitude, indeed, urges him to enquire, he postpones it, at least, till the strangers have been provided with all their wants. Thus Abraham urgently invited the three men, received and cheerfully treated them, without addressing to them any interrogation; it was *their* enquiries after Sarah (ver. 9) which led him to learn both their nature and their mission.—By none is the comfort of washing the feet more appreciated than by the eastern traveller, who makes his journey through sandy tracts often unshod or merely on sandals. The first attention shown to a stranger is, therefore, to place water before him for that purpose.—Abraham promised "a morsel of bread," but prepared a feast as plentiful and choice as his benevolence prompted and his wealth permitted him; moreover, the chief meal was generally taken about noon. He seemed suddenly renewed to youthful vigour; he hastened not only to give orders, but to perform himself his share of the labour. Not even the mightiest sheikh considers it beneath his dignity to take from his flocks and herds and to kill the beasts necessary for his domestic wants; nor does his wife shrink from any of the household duties. Thus Sarah took three seahs of the best flour, and quickly prepared the

son. 15. But Sarah denied, saying, I did not laugh; for she was afraid. And He said, Nay; thou didst laugh. 16. And the men rose from there, and looked toward Sodom: and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way.—17. And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that which I do; 18. Seeing that Abraham will surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth will be blessed in him? 19. For I have chosen him, that he might command his children and his household after him, that they should keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord might bring upon Abraham that which He hath spoken of him.—20. And the Lord said, The cry of Sodom and Gomorrah indeed is great, and their sin indeed is

unleavened cakes, which are baked either on hot coals, or in flat earthen vessels, or on an iron plate, or round the sides of a jar (see note on Exod. xii. 39). — The quantity of flour used by Abraham for his guests has been deemed excessive; for three seahs are exactly an ephah, or about a bushel (see notes on Exod. xvi. 16, 36); but he was regarded as very rich in all earthly property; his means permitted him to practise the duties of hospitality to the full desire of his heart; and hosts showed their respect to guests especially by regaling them with very great rations even beyond the possibility of real consumption; large portions were a sign of the cheerfulness with which the strangers were treated; and it has, with some probability, been supposed, that a part of them was intended to be taken as provisions on the way. — The animal, just killed and still warm, is at once roasted before the fire, a process by which the meat was considered to be far more tender and palatable than if a longer time was allowed to elapse between the killing and the dressing. Be this as it may, such is still the custom in the east on similar occasions of unexpected visits. — The feast consisted, besides the cakes and the calf, of sour and fresh milk. The former, known under the name of *laben*, was always, and is still, very extensively consumed in the east. Meat is not boiled in water, but in sour milk. The Arabians mix it with flour, dry it, and take it with them on their journeys, dissolving it with water into a refreshing beverage. — It would be unnecessary to speak of the abundance of milk among nomadic tribes; it is generally preserved in skin bottles, and belongs to the articles constituting the comfort and prosperity of individuals and tribes, since it suggests an estimate of their wealth in herds and flocks.—Abraham standing before his guests, served them in person; for it would have been disgraceful to permit a slave to perform the honourable office. And when the repast was finished, and the strangers resumed their journey, the patriarch accompanied them some distance. This is another mode of showing visitors marked attention and honour; it symbolises the idea that though the stranger is compelled to leave the host, the host is unwilling to part from the stranger; and this last act of a hospitable reception was generally accompanied with presents and provisions, according to the entertainer's ability.

17—33. Whilst Abraham was passing on with the angels, God is introduced as deliberating whether it would not be advisable to initiate him in the decree which

very heavy. 21. I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come to me; and if not, I will take cognizance *of it.* 22. And the men turned from there, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham was still standing before the Lord. 23. And Abraham approached, and said, Wilt Thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? 24. Perhaps there are fifty righteous within the city: wilt Thou also destroy, and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that *are* therein? 25. That be far from Thee to do in this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from Thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? 26. And the Lord said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous

He had fixed regarding the fate of Sodom and the other wicked towns. The patriarch was indeed deeply concerned in whatever happened, not to the Canaanites only, but to all other nations. He was destined to possess the land of the former, and to become the blessing of the latter through his faith; what Adam might have been, in a more direct manner, if he had not sinned by disobedience, Abraham was intended to become gradually and indirectly, in the lapse of ages. But this grand future was to be prepared by the *merit* of Abraham and his progeny; God loved or selected indeed the patriarch; but this preference was to be justified by superior virtue. God is, indeed, a Father to mankind; but the great ends for which He has created it, demand that He should also be its Judge. Two reasons, therefore, induced God to communicate to Abraham His designs on Sodom and the whole Pentapolis; first, to give him a great and palpable proof, that the destinies of the nations stand in an intimate relation with his mission; and then, to impress upon him, that the choice of God must be deserved, and that wickedness would destroy all his glorious prospects. The district of the Jordan also was originally beautiful and fertile, "like the garden of the Lord"; but the perversity of its inhabitants changed the blooming scene into a place of dreariness and horror.

When God informed Abraham, that He intended to search if the iniquity of Sodom and Gomorrah was indeed so great as it appeared to be by the cries of violence arising from there, he at once apprehended, that the plans of God were directed upon the destruction of the towns; and his heart was suddenly kindled into an ardent sympathy, which almost seemed to overpower him, and emboldened his courage to a prayer full of fire and impetuosity. He was well aware, that he was but "dust and ashes," and that his entreaties were addressed to the "Judge of the whole earth"; but his humanity could not bear the idea, that the just should suffer with the unjust; and his own excellence could not conceive the possibility, that in so populous a town all should be equally vicious. His harmless and childlike innocence must have been strong indeed, if he was not afraid to argue with God Himself, and to to warn Him against injustice (ver. 25). Six different times he approached the Almighty, not merely repeating but increasing his demand; till, at last, God granted him the assurance, that He would spare Sodom if but ten righteous men were found in it. This importunity of the patriarch,

within the city, I shall spare all the place for their sakes. 27. And Abraham answered and said, Behold, I pray Thee, I have undertaken to speak to the Lord, and I *am but* dust and ashes; 28. Perhaps there may lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt Thou destroy all the city for the five? And He said, If I find there forty-five, I shall not destroy *it*. 29. And he continued further to speak to Him, and said, Perhaps forty may be found there. And He said, I will not do *it* for the sake of the forty. 30. And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak:

so natural to a generous heart, has been interpreted in the most different manner. While some have considered it as mean bartering, others have found in it the prototype of every sincere and fervent prayer; and Luther's imagination saw burning tears roll down the patriarch's cheek, and heard the unspeakable sighs of his bosom. Both opinions are exaggerated. If Abraham persevered in his entreaties, it was, no doubt, from the conviction, that God does not listen with displeasure to the urgent and repeated requests of men; that He allows His will to be influenced by prayers; and that He alters His resolution if He is invoked in purity of heart. Thus, indeed, are Abraham's words intended to show the efficacy of human supplications, and to serve as an example for future imitation. But, on the other hand, the patriarch here scarcely invoked the Divine mercy; he asked only for justice; the good should not perish indiscriminately with the sinner; and even his final request was based on the condition, that at least *ten* virtuous men existed in Sodom. He was well aware, that wickedness cannot remain unpunished; that such indulgence would destroy the Divine rule on earth; but he asked of God, what He had evidently Himself determined; He had not said, that He intended to destroy Sodom, but only to examine the conduct of the inhabitants, and to act accordingly. But He proceeded, indeed, with far greater leniency than even Abraham's anxiety had the courage to advocate; for He delivered the house of Lot, the only virtuous family which was found in Sodom. Thus, it is evident that Abraham's prayer, far from being "impudent," was perhaps not even decided enough; he might have at once insisted upon the principle, that the sinners only should die, whatever their number might be: though he had confidence in the Divine attribute of justice, he had not fathomed its whole depth.

Abraham had once drawn the sword to rescue from the hands of foreign invaders the wealth of Sodom, which they had plundered; he was stimulated to this deed by the love he bore to his kinsman Lot (xiv. 14); but his intercession for the safety of the wicked town had not even this distantly interested motive; it was entirely dictated by feelings of general sympathy; it proceeded here not from the member of the family of Terah, but from the man who was to be a blessing to all generations. —Those who censure this narrative, asserting that it represents God as wavering and undetermined, should observe that His resolution was not yet taken (ver. 21); and even if this had been the case, that it is indeed always open to the repentance and prayer of those whom it concerns; God has no delight in punishing and destroying; He tried the hard-heartedness of Pharaoh by ten successive plagues; He accepted the repentance of the wicked Ninevites; and He ordered a systematic ritual of sacrifices, solely intended to furnish to man the means of restoring his peace with Himself. If we banish this "vacillation" from the attributes of God, man may tremble before His will; but he

Perhaps thirty may be found there. And He said, I will not do *it* if I find thirty there. 31. And he said, Behold, I pray Thee, I have undertaken to speak to the Lord: Perhaps twenty may be found there. And He said, I will not destroy *it* for the sake of the twenty. 32. And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak but once more: Perhaps ten may be found there. And He said, I will not destroy *it* for the sake of the ten.—33. And the Lord departed when He had finished to speak with Abraham: and Abraham returned to his place.

can never love Him. But the truth, that the *principles* on which His government is based, are eternal and unalterable, is expressed many times with singular emphasis: "God is no man that He should lie, nor a son of man that He should repent." God is, indeed, said to have repented that He had created man, and that He had appointed Saul king over Israel; but these are strong expressions denoting how unworthy the former had proved to bear the Divine image; and the latter, to be the representative of Divine sovereignty.

CHAPTER XIX.

SUMMARY.—Two of the angels arrived in the evening in Sodom, and were most hospitably received by Lot. But the wicked inhabitants of the town pressed round his house, demanding the strangers for flagitious purposes; and desisted only when the angels struck them with confusion. These messengers then announced to Lot the impending destruction of the district, and commanded him to be, on the following morning, prepared, with his family, to leave the town. He obeyed, went from Sodom accompanied by his wife and his two daughters, and escaped to Zoar. Then the whole territory of the impious towns was annihilated by a fearful rain of sulphur and fire. Lot's wife, disobeying a command of the angels, was converted into a pillar of salt; while his two daughters, believing that their family was the only one rescued from the general destruction, became, by their father, the mothers of Moab and Ammon.

1. And two of the angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom: and when Lot

1—3. While Abraham was appealing to the justice of God, two of the angels, his guests, had proceeded towards Sodom, where they arrived in the evening. The third angel had either remained with God, or had been sent upon another mission. The two messengers had evidently a double aim; for it seems to have been a general belief that no angel is sent to perform two functions; they intended both to try Lot and the Sodomites; the former, though imprudently dwelling among a wicked population, was yet one of the chosen family; and though Abraham, in his prayer, had not separated him from the other inhabitants of Sodom, God remembered him in the midst of the fearful judgment which He intended to dispense (ver. 29). Now Lot proved himself worthy of deliverance; he had preserved, at least, some of the virtues constituting the character of the righteous man; he was hospitable and affectionate; he practised the duties of charity, not only with courage,

saw *them*, he rose to meet them; and he bowed with his face to the ground; 2. And he said, Behold, I pray you, my lords, turn, I pray you, to your servant's house, and stay over night, and wash your feet, and you may rise early, and go your way. And they said, No, but we will stay in the street over night. 3. And he pressed upon them greatly; and they turned in to him, and came into his house; and he made them a repast, and baked un-

but with self-denial; and he exposed himself to the wrath of a cruel and incensed multitude, in order to gain the applause of his conscience. In his reception of the strangers, he is indeed the very image of Abraham; and the text relates it in nearly the same terms with which it had just introduced the patriarch's conduct. — Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. It is known that, in eastern towns, the places before the gate are the localities appointed for all general meetings; and, in ancient times, they were used for these purposes still more extensively, since there existed scarcely any other places of public resort. There the judge pronounced his decisions, and even kings held there occasionally their courts of justice; there sales and purchases were concluded before the eyes of the witnessing crowd, and provisions of every kind were offered for sale to the inhabitants; there the people assembled to hear news or to communicate them; they deliberated on public affairs, or indulged in social intercourse; there the law was read and ordinances proclaimed; there priests taught and prophets warned; and sacrifices were offered on the altars there erected. The gates resembled, therefore, in every respect, the market or the forum of the Romans, and were the most animated part of cities. As, therefore, the oriental passed a great portion of his time at the gates, they were conveniently arranged for all the purposes indicated. Spacious open places before them were reserved for political assemblies and commercial fairs; benches were provided for the public, and seats for the judges, no doubt within the gate itself, to shield them against the vicissitudes of the skies. These circumstances will sufficiently account for the Mosaic ordinance, that parts of the Law should be written on the gates; this was partly intended to indicate that the town belonged to God, and partly to remind the inhabitants, in the most conspicuous and effectual manner, of their religious duties. The town is the wider home of the citizens; hence the house and the gates are always coupled in the same precept. The custom of inscribing significant sentences, or representing symbolical figures on the gates, was prevalent among the Romans also, and is still in use among the Mohammedans. For the gates consisted generally of two valves, with strong posts and bolts; frequently, rooms were built above them; and in many cases they were furnished with watch-towers. As nearly all the cities of Palestine were fortresses, or, at least, surrounded with walls, the gates formed one of the most important points; they were necessarily of very durable materials, either brass or iron, though in many instances only covered with these metals; of stone cut out of a single slab, and very carefully hewn, polished, and divided into panels; sometimes also of hard wood. Turrets were not their only protection; for often a double gate, one behind the other, was built, to prevent sudden invasions into the city. In times of war they were shut as a matter of precaution; and the possession of the gates almost decided the fate of the city. Both from this reason, and from their great social importance, the gates are often synonymous with the towns themselves.

leavened cakes, and they ate.—4. Before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, surrounded the house, both old and young, all the people from every quarter: 5. And they called Lot, and said to him, Where *are* the men who came to thee this night? bring them out to us, that we may know them. 6. And Lot went out to them before the door, and shut the door after himself, 7. And said, I pray you, brethren, do not act wickedly.

Lot is here, with the greatest propriety, represented as sitting in the gate, where he could best see the strangers enter along the public road, and offer them his hospitality; but that he had repaired thither for the express purpose of looking out for strangers, would probably imply too ideal a notion of his virtue; while the opinion that he was sitting to act as judge, is perhaps an erroneous inference from a later notice occurring in this chapter (ver. 9). The angels did not accede at once to Lot's request; it was their intention to try his character, and to give him an opportunity of showing whether his generosity was merely a momentary emotion, or had become a settled feature in his character. Their answer, that they intended to stay over night in the open air, was, therefore, only a pretext, which they abandoned as soon as the persevering entreaties of Lot had evinced his sincerity and pleaded his justification. Their refusal was not dictated by the desire of being better enabled, by a pernoctation in the streets, to observe the conduct of the Sodomites; this they could not possibly do during the night; nor did they require it; for they were not only the angels of God, but God Himself acted in them, or was among them (vers. 18, 21); they were sent, not more to ascertain the moral state of the Sodomites, than to warn, and if possible to correct them: they represent the long-suffering of God, which does not accelerate the perdition of the sinner, but delights in his repentance; and they are intended as an example to earthly judges, to be considerate and slow in their condemning verdicts.

4—25. How indulgent God is, and how little He exacts from the weakness of man, was to be learnt from the instance of Lot himself. He was far from possessing an eminent degree of piety or faith: For, though he protected his guests with earnestness and zeal against the shameless impetuosity of the population, he forgot, in the exercise of his virtue, another duty of equal sacredness; in order to save the strangers, he intended to give up his daughters to perpetual ignominy; and whilst he had courage enough to rise for the safety of wanderers, he had no heart to feel the shame of his house. This weakness assumes a far more serious character from the fact, that those daughters were already betrothed (ver. 14), and, therefore, inviolable. But they were betrothed to Sodomites, who appear to have in every respect equalled the wickedness of their fellow-citizens. For they mocked the idea, that God should either have the will or the power to punish a depraved town; they spurned the hand extended to save them; and they deserved to perish in the general destruction. Lot, in forming or admitting an alliance with men so completely degenerate, showed that his horror against crime was not intense, and that his soul was already seriously affected by the society which surrounded him, and which he had chosen. In fact, he was far from exhibiting that alacrity in obeying the angels which true piety would have inspired; he tarried so long, that he almost brought himself and his house into imminent danger; and had not the angels urged him on, or rather led him away, he might have shared the fate of the wicked town. And what a picture of moral cor-

8. Behold, I pray you, I have two daughters who have not known a man; I will, I pray you, bring them out to you, and you may do to them as *is* good in your eyes: only to these men do nothing; since they came under the shadow of my roof. 9. And they said, Approach hither! And they said, This one came as a stranger *to us*, and he continually acteth as judge: now we shall deal worse with thee than with them. And they pressed much upon the man, upon Lot, and came near to break the door. 10. But the men put forth their hand, and brought Lot into the house to them, and shut the door. 11. And they smote the men who *were* at the door of the house with blind confusion, both small and great: and they wearied themselves to find the door.—12. And the men said to Lot, Hast thou here any one besides? son-in-law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of this place: 13. For we shall destroy this place, because their cry is great before the Lord; and the Lord hath sent us to destroy it. 14. And Lot went out, and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were

ruption does his family offer! He had sons (ver. 12), but they perished with the Sodomites, evidently because they resembled them in iniquity. His wife was refractory to the command of the angels, to whom she owed her deliverance; and she was converted into a lasting monument of the Divine anger. His daughters—how could they learn and revere chastity, as they were about to be allied to impious husbands, and had been on the point of being delivered up to the licentiousness of the most dissolute mob? Yet in spite of all this, God rescued Lot; the duty of hospitality was at least one great virtue which adorned his character; he might, perhaps, in other respects also have been still alive to right and honesty; he even seems to have frequently admonished his heedless fellow-citizens to abandon their wicked ways, and was still regarded as a stranger among them (ver. 9); his heart might have long struggled, and but gradually fallen into moral apathy; but his virtues were, in themselves, not sufficient for his salvation; "the mercy of the Lord was upon him" (ver. 16); and he owed this mercy to the piety of Abraham, whose moral excellence God remembered in the midst of the overthrow of Sodom (ver. 29). God cannot connive at open and wilful wickedness; but the earnest practice of one great virtue suffices to engage His compassion, and to secure His grace. Such is the dogmatical lesson embodied in this section.

The awful degeneracy of the inhabitants of Sodom is described in a few brief and powerful touches: the whole people, from every part of the town, old and young, seem to burn in sinful flames; their wicked desire borders on rage; they are wild and clamorous; they besiege the house of Lot; their inebriated senses are intent upon the most unnatural, upon execrable crimes; when Lot attempts to appease their frantic excitement, by an appeal to the holy duties of hospitality, they increase their tumultuous pressure; they threaten to break

about to marry his daughters, and said, Rise, go out of this place; for the Lord will destroy the city. But he appeared to his sons-in-law as one that mocked. 15. And when the morning-dawn arose, the angels urged Lot on, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, who are at hand; lest thou be destroyed by the iniquity of the city. 16. But he lingered: and the men seized his hand, and the hand of his wife, and the hand of his two daughters, the mercy of the Lord being upon him: and they brought him out, and set him without the city. 17. And when they had brought them forth without *the city*, He said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, nor stay in all the district; escape to the mountain, lest thou be destroyed. 18. And Lot said to them, Oh not so, Lord: 19. Behold, I pray Thee, Thy servant hath found grace in Thy sight, and Thou hast made great Thy mercy, which Thou hast shown to me in saving my life; but I cannot escape to the mountain, lest the evil overtake me, and I die. 20. Behold, I pray Thee, this city *is* near to flee thither, and it *is* small: Oh let me escape thither, I pray Thee—*is* it not

into the house, and to do violence to Lot, whose admonitions they hate and ridicule. Now their guilt was evident, even to lenient judges; they had proved, that they were past correction, and that the measure of their sins was complete; they had been tried and found guilty without a single redeeming quality; not even ten, yea, not even one righteous man was found in the whole town; they had neglected the last possibility of rescue; their destruction was unavoidable. The angels, therefore, who had hitherto, even in the eyes of Lot, been no more than ordinary mortals, then, for the first time, manifested their supernatural power; they struck the nefarious people with confusion, infatuated their senses, and wearied out their strength and their patience.—They, further, announced to Lot that it was their mission, as messengers of justice, to destroy the infamous town; for the cry of iniquity had come before God. When the morning-star rose, they intended to execute the Divine command; they hastened to lead the lingering family of Lot out of the town, and enjoined on them not to turn round, or to stop in the whole district of the Jordan, but to hurry till they should arrive in the eastern mountains on the other side of the Jordan (xiv. 10). But here Lot's faith wavered; he was afraid that he would be unable safely to reach that distant point, and that he would find his death in the fearful catastrophe; he asked, that, for his sake, a small neighbouring town, formerly called Bela (xiv. 2), might be saved, and that he might be permitted to seek refuge there, intimating that it was so insignificant as scarcely to be worthy of Divine anger. The Lord consented; in the morning Lot arrived at Zoar—and the judgment commenced.

If we ascribe any accuracy to our narrative, it is clear, that Zoar was in the immediate vicinity of Sodom. Now, about the situation of Zoar there exists little doubt. It was a town of Moab, and formed the south-eastern boundary of

small?—that my soul may live. 21. And He said to him, Behold, I take regard of thee in this thing also, not to overthrow the city, of which thou hast spoken. 22. Hasten, escape thither; for I cannot do anything till thou art come thither. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar [small]. 23. The sun rose upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar. 24. And the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord from heaven; 25. And He overthrew those cities, and the whole district, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and the growth of the soil.

the plain of the Pentapolis It has, therefore, been justly identified with the considerable ruins found in Wady Kerek, on the eastern side of the Dead Sea, where its shores form a considerable bay, and where a certain degree of fertility still prevails. We may hope rather than expect, that authentic ruins of the four destroyed towns will ever be discovered. Biblical historians and prophets already speak of them as localities utterly and tracelessly swept away; and the remark of Josephus, that "shadows" of them still existed in his time, is vague and doubtful.

THE DEAD SEA.

The origin of this remarkable lake is as mysterious as its present nature is extraordinary; it stands alone not only in the geography of Palestine and Asia, but of the whole known surface of the earth: and hitherto science, though aided by zealous researches, has not advanced beyond the region of theory and doubt. The veil which the Biblical text spread over it, is not yet lifted. But let us briefly state the undisputed facts; we shall distinctly separate all accounts invented by imagination, diffused by rumour, or engendered by the human propensity to the marvellous.

The sea may be divided into two very dissimilar parts; the northern half is incomparably deeper than the southern part; for while the former reaches a depth of about 1,200 feet, that of the latter does not exceed 18 feet, and is at the extremity so shallow as not to be navigable by boats. It is, therefore, evident, that the bottom of the Dead Sea consists of two different plains, a depressed and a more elevated one. Now, it is probable that this southern and more elevated plain was formed by the events to which our text refers; that the lake originally consisted of the northern part only; and that the same catastrophe which produced the depression of the southern plain destroyed the four cities. These changes were apparently effected in a violent manner by volcanic action. It is undisputed, that Palestine was frequently subject to fearful convulsions even in historical times; the earthquake in the reign of King Uzziah remained long in the memory of the inhabitants, filling them with fear and consternation. At the north-east of the Dead Sea, is the Dshebel Musa, consisting entirely of black bituminous limestone and burning like coal; it is, no doubt, an extinct volcano, like the Frank Mountain, north-west of Safed; and the hot springs of Tiberias, Gadara, and Calirrhoë, point to the working of the same subterraneous powers, which are further

evident from many crater-like depressions, the frequent and visible disturbances of the normal rocks, and the deep and numerous crevices. The whole valley, through which the Jordan flows, exhibits volcanic traces; at the western side, the Jura limestone is intersected by numerous dykes and seams of basalt, with deep fissures and saline sulphureous springs. New crevices are constantly formed upon the banks of the Dead Sea; on its south-east side, red and brown hornstone, porphyry, and similar rocks prevail; and near the fortress of Shobec are two volcanic craters. Several lines of earthquakes have been traced, including Hebron, Jerusalem, Nablous, Tiberias, and thence in a north-eastern direction, extending to the countries on the slope of the Taurus. The earthquake of 1759 buried 20,000 persons in the valley of Baalbec, and for three months the terrified inhabitants of the Lebanon districts did not venture to enter their houses, but lived in temporary tents. It is, therefore, more than probable that a volcanic eruption effected the depression of the then fertile plain of Siddim; and the bitumen-pits with which it abounded (xiv. 10) sufficiently betray the volcanic character of the region. The natural consequence of such change would be that the waters of the lake, as far as it then extended, covered this submerged plain, and the combined areas thenceforth formed the basin of the lake.

The length of the lake is about thirty-nine, its breadth between eight and twelve geographical miles. The water is impregnated with salt almost to saturation; light subjects float on the surface, and heavy ones sink but very slowly; persons unable to swim are borne along on it; the trees standing in the neighbourhood are covered with a crust of salt, the result of the exhalations; the whole vicinity appears sometimes like a snowy plain; the clothes of those who stay on its shores, or sail on its waters, become impregnated with the same mineral; whatever object is thrown into it assumes a salt-crust; metals, especially iron, silver, and gold, if exposed to its evaporations, become corroded, black, and coated with a slimy substance. The colour of the water is clear and inodorous; but its taste, resembling in nauseousness that of a solution of alum, is so bitter and pungent, that it causes painful itching and even ulceration on the lips; and if brought near a wound, or any diseased part, produces a most excruciating sensation. The salt is mostly brought into the lake from the salt-mountain (Usdum) on the south-western shores, about three leagues in extent; but in the northern part, the bottom of the lake itself is an incrustation of that substance, and possesses many beds yielding excellent salt, clear as crystal, not only sufficient for the use of the Arabs, but allowing considerable exportation. On the eastern side of the lake are chiefly three points, where salt, pure, white, and wholesome, is found, often in crusts of such thickness that they bear horse and rider.

Besides salt, the lake furnishes another substance, bitumen, or asphalt, so characteristic to it, that it hence received the name Lacus Asphaltites. The bitumen is a symptom and remnant of the volcanic nature of the region; and the natives have observed, that those large masses of bitumen which have been compared with bulls, calves, or houses, and even with islands, appear only in consequence of earthquakes; after the shock in 1834, the quantity driven to one part of the south-western shore amounted to nearly 6,000 pounds, while the masses gathered after the convulsion of 1837, were of still more gigantic dimensions. The neighbouring tribes display great zeal in securing it; and, as it forms a most lucrative article of trade, their emulation not unfrequently rises to hostile contention. In ancient times, the natives fetched it on large rafts of reeds, cutting it with the axe, after pouring certain fluids upon it, and sold it especially to Egypt, where it was extensively used for embalming the dead. It was further employed for shipbuilding; as a cement in masonry instead of mortar; and sometimes as fuel instead of coals; and for medicinal drugs. The statement that a large mass of solid bitumen, of more than 300 feet in length, rises annually from the lake, is questionable; since, that mineral is vomited up at uncertain seasons, in accord-

ance with the uncontrollable flames at the bottom by which it is produced; but the assertion of natives and others that drops of pitch are distilled from the crevices of cretaceous rocks on the eastern shore, opposite Ain Dsheddi, is not at variance with the character of the locality. The drops agglomerate and harden in the heat of the sun, till they fall or are driven into the lake in considerable masses. In the sand on the shores, pieces of asphalt are frequently found, either fluid or hard, or intermixed with chalk and clay. The whole soil around has, in fact, a burnt appearance, and abounds in volcanic substances; it is, to the distance of half an hour, like "ruinous lime-kilns." The gravel is almost black, and burns like coals, emitting, when lighted, the same strong and offensive odour as the slime of the lake; but it is made into rosaries, toys, and other elegant articles, eagerly bought by pious pilgrims. Together with the bitumen, much soot is brought up, by which every shining metal is tarnished; and this change in the colour of vessels serves the natives as an indication of the approaching rise of asphalt.

Such being the nature of the water, we may easily understand that it is devoid of almost all animal and vegetable life; that especially no fishes live in it; that the conchylia brought down from the Jordan die there; that no water-plants thrive in it; that it even communicates to many parts of its shores a sickly and dreary appearance. But whatever is asserted beyond this, is fabulous. Though the specific gravity of the water is considerably greater than that of other seas, heavy substances sink to the bottom, though slowly; those who wade through it, are not "immediately lifted out of the water"; birds, even pigeons and quails, which happen to fly over its surface, do not die; the exhalations are not pestilential, or fatal to human life, though fevers are not unusual, on account of the intense heat; the asphalt is not ordinarily found floating along the surface in great masses; at present, it is even extremely rare; and the coasts are by no means in all parts utterly destitute of vegetation or animal life, so that no blade of corn should be visible. In the south-east especially is an extensive and in parts very fertile plain, the breadth of which varies between one and five miles; near Ain Dsheddi is a luxurious vegetation; birds of song and birds of prey abound on the trees and rocks; and wherever rivers force their way from the mountains into the lake, the borders are clothed with verdure, and often with useful plants. The apple of Sodom, which is said to be of beautiful appearance, but to contain nothing but ashes, is probably the fruit of the Asclepias gigantea, which, if pressed, opens like a bladder, is filled with air, and leaves in the hand nothing but a few fibres, and the fragments of the peel. There is no reason to deny the existence of such a fruit altogether, and it does not necessarily belong to that class of fictions which, as Lord Bacon observed, are only kept up because they "serve for a good allusion, or help the poet to a similitude."

The atmosphere over and around the sea is heavy and oppressive; pale-blue and misty; shut in on both sides by high, naked, and often precipitous mountains, which, on the east side, rise 3,000 feet above its level, the lake is, for the greatest part of the year under the influence of the powerful solar rays; the shores, in many places, descend with extraordinary steepness into the lake; the surface of the water lies like lead, unruffled by a breeze, and unmoved by a wave; death-like silence hangs over it; the birds hasten across: a gloomy and desolate spectacle. Those who navigate it, experience a paralysing drowsiness, thirst, and giddiness; it offers sometimes a kind of mirage, and the strangest contrasts of colours; in stormy nights, it is like "a sheet of phosphorescent foam." The noxious smell which ancient and modern travellers have noticed is not constantly felt, but is, in seasons of great heat, occasioned by the stagnation of the inert waters, by the marshes and pools along the shores and north of the lake, and especially by the black slime at the bottom; while some ascribe the disagreeable odour to the asphalt burning beneath the ground, and spreading a fetid smell twenty days before it is visible on the surface. The water of the sea changes its

appearance three times every day, and reflects different colours from the rays of the sun; in the morning it is nearly black, owing to the dense fog above it; at noon, in the increased heat, of a pale-blue; while before sunset it assumes a reddish or yellowish colour, as if tinged by an admixture of slime. It is enveloped in a thin transparent vapour of a purple colour, appearing, in the distance, like smoke from burning sulphur; and is like a vast and sometimes seething caldron of metal, fused, but motionless.—A broad strip of foam, perhaps indicating the direction of the floods of the Jordan, though beginning several miles west of its influx, is sometimes seen, extending through the whole lake from north to south, showing a constant bubbling motion, and accompanied by a similar corresponding strip above it in the air.

Strabo already had a correct notion of the volcanic nature of the valley of the Dead Sea; he observes, that the asphalt rises mostly from the middle of the lake, because the source of the fire is in the centre; he mentions rugged rocks near Masada, bearing marks of fire; speaks of fissures in many places, of a soil like ashes, of pitch falling in drops from the rocks, of rivers boiling up and emitting a fetid odour to a great distance, and of dwellings in every direction overthrown; and he then alludes to the tradition of the natives, that formerly thirteen cities, with the capital Sodom, flourished in those parts; that, however, shocks of earthquakes, eruptions of flames, and hot springs, containing asphalt and sulphur, caused the lake to burst its bounds; that the rocks took fire, and some cities were swallowed up, while others were deserted by such of the inhabitants as were able to escape.—But as our text (ver. 24) states, that the destruction of Sodom was caused by "a rain of brimstone and fire," it has been supposed, by many ancient and modern writers, that the bitumen which covered the valley, and of which, perhaps, even the houses were partly built, was kindled by lightning, and that the region was totally burnt out. But, if brimstone descended at the same time from heaven, the lightning was not the only agency, and the bitumen would have been unnecessary to effect the destruction. We must rather take the emphatical sentence: "the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven," as describing the Divine judgment coming from above, whatever the means employed for this purpose may have been; although it was possibly the author's notion, that the bitumen, lighted by the heavenly fire, and increased by the brimstone, caused the slumbering volcanic flames of the earth suddenly to break forth.

After these explanations, the various names which the lake bears, will be easily understood. It is called the *Eastern Sea*, because it separates in the east the territory of Palestine Proper from Peræa, or the districts east of the Jordan; the *Sea of the desert-plain*, from its situation in the depressed tracts in the east of the mountains of Judah; the *Salt-sea*, and *Asphalt-sea*, from the minerals which its waters contain or carry along; and *Dead Sea*, on account of the death-like stillness which prevails through its extent, and the absence of cheering animal or vegetable life. The Arabians designate it generally by the name of *Sea of Lot*, from obvious reasons.—The navigation of the lake has, within the last twenty years, been several times attempted. Costigan was followed by More and Beek, by Symonds, and Molyneux; but more successfully than by his predecessors, the difficult undertaking was executed by Lynch, in the name of the North American government; and this expedition was attended with results of the utmost importance to the accurate knowledge of the extraordinary region. — The question, whether the water contains animal life, received new interest from the microscopic observations of Ehrenberg; and a not inconsiderable number of animals of the lower orders have been discovered; though the greatest nicety is necessary to distinguish the beings originally living in the Dead Sea, and those carried into it from the floods of the Jordan.

26. But his wife looked back behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.—27. And Abraham repaired early in the morning to the place where he had stood before the Lord: 28. And he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the district, and saw, and, behold, the smoke of the country rose like the smoke of the furnace.—29. And when God destroyed the cities of the district, God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when He overthrew the cities in the which Lot dwelt.—30. And Lot went up out of

26—29. A fearful judgment had been brought upon the sin-laden cities; awful desolation was spread over a district once blooming like the beauty of paradise; God had manifested His omnipotence and sovereignty; but, in punishing the wickedness of a province, His paternal care had not neglected the welfare of one family which He deemed worthy of deliverance; in His anger, He had not forgotten His mercy; and while the flames were devouring the cities, Lot had safely reached the town expressly preserved in order to afford him refuge and shelter. Could God, in showing so much love, not expect faith and reliance? The trial of obedience was small and easy indeed; but it involved the proof whether the rescued family believed the angel, or required personal certainty, before they would follow his guidance; and it was a trial deemed sufficient by ancient nations under similar circumstances. When Orpheus had descended into the lower world in order to ask back his beloved wife Eurydice, Pluto, moved by the magic of his harmonies, gave him the promise, that she would be restored to him under condition that he did not turn round to her till he had passed the Avernian valley: and when he disobeyed, she fell back into the regions of hell. Sacred actions, performed in reliance on the omnipotent assistance of the gods, were done with the face averted, as if symbolically to express, that the believing mind requires no ocular evidence. We have, therefore, to explain the command here given to Lot from the same notions; it was a proof of faith; and from this point of view, we have to understand the pillar of salt into which Lot's wife was converted, which even Josephus pretended still to have seen; for which travellers have searched as for a most sacred relic; and to which Fathers of the Church have ascribed the most extraordinary qualities. The patriarch, who had evinced so deep a sympathy in the fate of Sodom, was naturally anxious to learn the decision of the Divine judge; and when, at the early dawn, he looked in the direction of the Pentapolis, and saw the whole country enveloped as in the smoke of a furnace, he felt with sorrow, that not even ten righteous men had been found in the whole population; though he learnt soon afterwards, that Lot at least had been saved for his sake.—Thus, the narrative exhibits not only the completest consistency, but excites unabating interest by its graphic liveliness.

30—38. In the first consternation of imminent danger, Lot had escaped to Zoar; but when he saw the destruction, like a devastating flame, spread over wider and wider tracts; when the streams of lava rose in higher pillars, and the fiery masses were hurled over the whole plain: he did not consider himself safe in a town so near, and so lowly situated; and he hastened to the mountain of Moab, originally assigned to him by the angels as the place of refuge (ver. 17). These heights abound in natural caverns or grottoes, peculiarly fit for human occupation (see p. 225). Here Lot arrived with his two daughters, alone left to him of all his household. A sense

Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him; for he was afraid to dwell in Zoar: and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters. 31. And the older said to the younger, Our father *is* old, and *there is* not a man on the earth to come to us after the manner of all the earth: 32. Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed from our father. 33. And they made their father drink wine that night: and the older went and lay with her father; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor

of dreariness and solitude might soon have overwhelmed them; the stillness of death around; the absence of human beings; the vegetation burnt up as far their eyes could reach. What was more natural for them than to suppose, that a second universal judgment had visited the earth, as in Noah's age; but that this time fire was the agency of the Divine wrath, since He had promised to bring no other deluge over the earth? Lot's daughters had been reared in a depraved town; they had been betrothed to wicked men; their father had but the day before consented to expose their virtue to the unbridled desires of an excited multitude; let us add to all this their oriental notions, that it is ignominous to leave no children; and we can understand, though we cannot cease to abhor, their incestuous conduct. They had fallen into a most deplorable confusion of views; so far from considering their wishes criminal, they regarded the offspring thus produced as peculiarly pure and legitimate; they called their sons, with a certain boast, "the son from the father" and the "son of my own people"; they had, indeed, some consciousness that their conduct was guilty, since they made their father drunk, and did not venture to communicate to him either their design or their deed; but they believed that the preservation of their name and race was a higher duty even than morality. But however their conduct might have been estimated, our narrative certainly exempts Lot from all serious reproach; he was a mere instrument; his senses were overpowered by unconscious torpor; "he knew not when they lay down, nor when they rose"; and his excess in the enjoyment of wine is no more blamed than it was before in Noah. No word is employed, no allusion made, in the whole of this tale to express disgust, aversion, or hatred; the laws concerning the allowed and forbidden degrees were not yet fixed; Abraham himself lived in a matrimony cursed as an abomination in the Mosaic code (Lev. xviii. 9); the event is related with all the calmness of historical composition; it must have been derived from tradition; and the extraordinary circumstances believed to have occasioned it, extenuated, if they did not excuse, the preposterous conclusions and the hasty conduct of the daughters. The impartiality of the narrative is sufficiently guaranteed by the fact, that it openly acknowledges the near relationship of the Moabites and Ammonites with the Hebrews; this concession may imply the historical fact, that the former, like the latter, were of Mesopotamian origin; nor do we later, for a considerable period, hear these nations taunted on account of incestuous descent; they were simply called the sons of Lot (Deut. ii. 9, 19; Ps. lxxxiii. 9); being kinsmen of Abraham, they had duly received from God, in the east of the Jordan, a tract of land which the Israelites were forbidden to attack or to injure, since it was intended as their permanent possession (Deut. ii. 9, 19, 20). But later they evinced an unfriendly and invidious spirit against the Hebrews, refusing to furnish them with

when she rose. 34. And on the following day, the older said to the younger, Behold, I lay yesternight with my father: let us make him drink wine this night also; and go thou, *and* lie with him, that we may preserve seed from our father. 35. And they made their father drink wine that night also: and the younger rose, and lay with him; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when

provisions on their way through the desert to Canaan, and appointing the heathen prophet Balaam to curse them. Hence a bitter and implacable enmity arose; the legislator ordered that the Ammonites and Moabites should not, even in the remotest generations, come into the congregation of the Lord; and that they should never be received as allies, friends, or associates (Deut. xxiii. 4—7). Nor is it impossible, that after that time, when the flame of national hatred was kindled, the origin of both tribes was branded as criminal; as, indeed, the precepts regarding their future separation from the Hebrews follow immediately after the interdiction concerning "the bastards" who should never be admitted into the holy community; and the expressions used, in both instances, are so similar, that it is scarcely doubtful that the Moabites and Ammonites were then also despised and rejected as bastards.

The history of the Moabites, as far as it is connected with the Hebrews, has been noticed in another place (on Exod. xv. 15); a few facts will suffice with regard to the Ammonites. They had expelled the Zamzummim from the tracts between the Jabbok and Arnon, and settled in those mountainous and naturally fortified regions; but after the immigration, under Joshua, they were attacked by the Israelites and deprived of a part of their territory; they joined the Moabites and other nations in taking revenge upon their enemies; but their success was but transitory; they were defeated successively by Jephthah, Saul, and David, who curbed their pride and broke their power. But they recovered a part of their strength, and attacked the Hebrews, under Jehoshaphat; but were defeated, and became, later, tributary to Uzziah and Jotham. Their aversion to the Israelites survived the captivity of the latter; they insulted them in their national misfortune, joined their Babylonian enemies, and subdued the provinces east of the Jordan. Their insatiable vindictiveness was not satisfied by these disasters; their king, Baalis, caused the assassination of Gedaliah, the hope of the peaceful colonists; they constantly vexed the returning Jews, and took arms against them even in the Maccabean wars. Thus, without intermission or abatement, the fury of the younger tribes raged against their kindred and their blood, during more than thirteen centuries.

After this event, Lot disappears from the pages of the Bible; but his history was not introduced without purpose; though but collateral, it eminently serves to illustrate the chief ideas of Genesis. As he belonged to the family of Abraham, he was blessed with wealth; but as he did not avoid the intercourse with the wicked, he fell into dangers, misfortunes, and crime (comp. 2 Peter ii. 7, 8). His history is, therefore, a practical warning to the Israelites, to avoid every familiarity with idolators; not to suffer them among themselves, nor to admit their religious worship. But further, the Canaanites had received from God the land of Palestine as a temporary possession; but having shown themselves undeserving of the grant, they were doomed to extirpation; the land reverted, therefore, to God; He might destroy it or give it to another more virtuous nation. Now, the history of Sodom, as later that of Jericho, was to teach the Israelites, that though they

she rose. 36. And both daughters of Lot conceived from their father. 37. And the older bore a son, and called his name Moab: he *is* the father of the Moabites to this day. 38. And the younger also bore a son, and called his name Ben-ammi: he *is* the father of the children of Ammon to this day.

conquered Palestine, it belonged to God, who is its only lord. This idea forms one of the essential points of the Hebrew theocracy; it is the basis of many most important laws; in fact, of the whole agrarian constitution of Mosaism; the land was inalienable; it lay uncultivated in every seventh, and returned to its original owner in every fiftieth year; God might either devastate it or take it from the Israelites, whenever their depravity rendered them unworthy of the gift. The destiny of the devoted cities embodies, then, the solemn sentence of the Law: "When later the generation of your children and the stranger from distant lands see the plagues of this country (Palestine) and all the diseases which the Lord hath laid upon it, and observe that the whole land is brimstone, and salt, and combustion, that it is not sown, nor produceth vegetation, nor bringeth forth grass, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, which the Lord overthrew in His anger and in His wrath; and when all the nations will ask, wherefore the Lord hath done thus to the land, then they shall say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers" (Deut. xxix. 22—25; comp. Hos. xi. 8). The very names of Sodom and Gomorrah became, later, terms for horror and destruction; and were employed by the prophets to describe the abysses of sin and to warn of its direful consequences. Korah and his followers had committed one flagrant crime against the man of God, on a strange soil on which they happened to have their temporary encampment (Num. xvi.); therefore the earth opened its mouth, devouring the offenders, but remaining itself uninjured. But the people of Sodom had sinned in their own land, staining it with their iniquity for many generations; therefore it was entirely and utterly swept away.

CHAPTER XX.

SUMMARY.—Abraham journeyed from Hebron to Gerar, in the land of the Philistines. Sarah, professing to be his sister, was brought into the house of the king, Abimelech, who, however, did not approach her; and warned both by diseases and disorders befalling his house, and by a vision of God, restored her to the patriarch, and was, on his intercession, released from the threatening dangers. Though arguing with Abraham about his inconsiderate conduct, and scarcely satisfied with the excuse offered by him, he dismissed the couple, enriched with many presents, and permitted them to choose for their permanent abode any part of his territory.

1. And Abraham journeyed from there to the country in the south, and dwelt between Kadesh and Shur, and

1—8. Abraham, reminded by the catastrophe of the cities of the Jordan, that he ought not to bind up his fate too closely with that of any heathen town, and that he should never cease to regard himself as a stranger in a strange land; left Hebron, where he had long stayed, had found fertile plains, had gained friends

sojourned in Gerar. 2. And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, She *is* my sister: and Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah. 3. But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou wilt die on account of the woman whom thou hast taken; for she *is* a husband's wife. 4. But Abimelech had not come near her: and he said, Lord, wilt thou slay also righteous people? 5. Did he not say to me, She *is* my sister? and she, even she herself said, He *is* my brother: in the integrity of my heart and in the innocence of my hands have I done this. 6. And God said to him in a dream, I know also that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; and I

and allies, and which was sacred to him as the locality of repeated visions and a Divine covenant. He journeyed southward, halted at different places between Kadesh and Shur, till he reached Gerar, where he intended to take up his temporary abode. The position of this town is, on the whole, certain from the statement of our text; and corresponds with the ruins of Khribet-el-Gerar, lately identified with it. It belonged to the territory of the Philistines, who, even at that time, had not only occupied the southern coast, but had seized or built towns in the interior of the land, in districts, at later periods, less fertile and less inhabited. Abraham had scarcely reached Gerar when trials and dangers beset him; he succumbed to the former, though he was saved by God from the latter. He feared the sensuality and barbarity of the Philistines as he had apprehended the licentiousness of the Egyptians; and he resorted to the same ignoble device by which he had intended to shield himself before. However, his guilt was, in this instance, considerably greater; he repeated an offence which manifested a want of faith, and for which he had been censured by Pharaoh; but what is still more aggravating, he exposed Sarah to degradation at a time when the long-promised son, the seed of all future blessing, was expected. It is impossible to conceal the weakness and vacillation of Abraham; and difficult, not to compare his conduct with Lot's endeavour to protect his guests at the expense of his daughters' shame. But on the other hand, it may be argued that the result of the first occurrence in Egypt encouraged him to venture upon the same course a second time; and his action may thus be construed into true reliance and faith. In this manner, the offence would, indeed, be lessened; but it would be "trying God"; it would be moral debility, which, instead of courageously facing difficulties, leaves them indolently to Divine compassion; and it would be forgetfulness of the first maxim of active religion, that to be worthy of God's assistance, man must unwearyingly exert his strength. But we may ask, what was the guilt of Abimelech? He had taken Sarah into his house, believing that she was Abraham's sister; and he was smitten with disease (ver. 17); his whole household fell into alarming misery (ver. 18); and he was terrified by the threat of imminent death (ver. 7). The reply to this question is important and significant, and shows the unity of the composition. The plagues befalling Abimelech were the trial of his own virtue. The people of Sodom had just been subjected to a moral test; they had been found steeped in wickedness, and were, therefore, annihilated with their territory. But the sin of the other inhabitants of Canaan had been said to require four hundred years more to be complete, and to

withheld thee also from sinning against Me: therefore I did not suffer thee to touch her. 7. Now, therefore, restore the man's wife; for he *is* a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou dost not restore *her*, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that *are* thine. 8. And Abimelech rose early in the morning, and called all his servants, and told all these things in their ears: and the men were very much afraid.— 9. And Abimelech called Abraham, and said to him, What hast thou done to us? and what have I sinned against thee, that thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? thou hast done deeds to me that

cause their destruction (xv. 16); and our narrative proves the correctness of that announcement; the king of the Philistines stood victoriously the trial; and, like Melchizedek, he exhibits a picture of virtue, forcing upon us the conviction, that it would have been injustice to deprive men like him of their land. For he was warned by a sudden infliction, that his house was on the brink of sin; he abstained from approaching Sarah; he deferentially submitted to the admonition of God; he was conscious of his innocence, and relied upon Divine justice; he mentioned, with a certain moral indignation, the insincerity of both Abraham and Sarah; God Himself declared him pure and guiltless; and even his servants acknowledged and revered the Divine visitation. Thus, our chapter stands in close and organic relation with the preceding judgment held over Sodom. —It is true, that the king had, by God Himself, been withheld from sin (ver. 6); but as his heart was inclined to righteousness, God assisted and fortified him; whereas minds already infected with the taint of sin, as that of Pharaoh, who, from the commencement, haughtily asked: "Who is the Lord that I shall obey His voice?" (Exod. v. 2), show themselves unworthy of Divine grace, and hasten into their destruction. The sixth verse is, therefore, of especial importance for the ethics of the Old Testament.— Every transgression is an offence against God; violence done to Sarah would, therefore, have been a crime against His authority; but the sin would in this case have been the more grievous, as Abraham "the prophet" was concerned (ver. 7). The text leaves no doubt how this dignity is to be understood. The prophet, or "the mouth" of God, being the medium by which God communes with man, may also be the instrument through which man brings his wishes before God; he may *pray* for another, certain that the supplications are more acceptable from his purer lips. To this we may add, that forgiveness is the more readily granted, if solicited by the injured man himself; and, hence, there was double reason why Abraham should have interceded for Abimelech. Though the danger of pollution had been occasioned much more by Abraham's than the king's guilt, the former stood nearer to the love of God than any other being, by the covenant which He had concluded with him, and by the end which He intended to realize with his posterity.

9—18. When Abimelech, with an emphasis disclosing the earnestness of his indignation and the awe of his heart, represented to Abraham the danger into which he had been unconsciously led, the patriarch found it necessary to attempt an excuse and a justification before the heathen king. But his efforts were far from successful; he uttered three reasons scarcely amounting to more than as many pretexts; first, he exonerated the king, and pleaded, that he

ought not to be done. 10. And Abimelech said to Abraham, What didst thou see, that thou hast done this thing? 11. And Abraham said, Because I thought, *There is* not any fear of God in this place; and they will slay me for my wife's sake. 12. And yet indeed *she is* my sister; she *is* the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife. 13. And when God caused me to wander from my father's house, I said to her, This *is* thy kindness which thou shalt show to me; at every place whither we shall come, say of me, He *is* my brother. 14. And Abimelech took sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and maidservants, and gave *them* to Abraham, and restored to him Sarah his wife. 15. And Abimelech said, Behold, my land *is* before thee: dwell where it pleaseth thee. 16. And to Sarah he said, Behold, I have given to thy brother a thousand *shekels* of silver: behold, he *is* to thee a protection to all who *are* with thee,

feared the depravity of the people; he then urged the specious fact, that though Sarah was his wife, she was also his half-sister; and he, lastly, appealed to the compassion of the king, alluding to the erratic and uncertain life which his God had imposed upon him, far from his home and native land, and which brought him into contact with so many ferocious and lawless tribes, that precaution was an absolute duty. Though these reasons were in themselves scarcely satisfactory, they afforded, thus accumulated, at least a proof of Abraham's repentance; and implied an acknowledgment, that Abimelech's surprise was not unjustified. This sufficed to the noblemindedness of the latter to make him forget the past, and to see in Abraham only "the prophet," the friend of God, to whose prayer he was to owe his deliverance and the restoration of his happiness. He re-united him with his wife, gave him valuable presents in cattle and servants, and permitted him unrestricted settlement in his territory; and, since Sarah deserved likewise a compensation for the anxiety suffered by her in the house of the stranger, he gave to Abraham for her a thousand shekels of silver (for, the property of the wife belonged to the husband), and addressed to her a remark embodying the experience which he had just made, and the respect with which it inspired him (ver. 16); he said, though she might profess that Abraham was her brother, he was her protection against every man; she might be taken by others as his sister, but she would soon be known and convicted of being his wife by the supernatural interference of God, who, both in his case, and that of the Egyptian king, had watched over her purity. This remark implied no blame or reproach; it was, on the contrary, dictated by the king's conviction of Abraham's high dignity; but it might yet contain a slight allusion to the duty devolving on the patriarch and his wife, not to cause and provoke such Divine manifestations, and thereby to bring danger and fear over innocent individuals and households.

Abraham's prayer was efficacious; Abimelech was healed; and his wives gave again birth to children. It is necessary to remark, in conclusion, that though the Hebrew historian recorded the weakness of Abraham's conduct, he manifestly designed

and with all: and thou wilt be recognised. 17. And Abraham prayed to God: and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maidservants; and they bore *children*. 18. For the Lord had entirely closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, on account of Sarah, Abraham's wife.

this occurrence in Gerar for shedding an additional halo round his person: and the effect is, that his failings, if not forgotten, are certainly veiled, and removed into a distant background.

CHAPTER XXI.

SUMMARY.—In the hundredth year of Abraham's life, Sarah, herself ninety years old, bore a son, who was called Isaac, and circumcised on the eighth day from his birth. But discord arose between Sarah and Hagar; the former insisted upon the expulsion of the latter, together with her son Ishmael; and Abraham, at first indignant at the proposal, yielded to the direct command of God. When Hagar and Ishmael were wandering in the desert of Beer-sheba, and nearly exhausted from want of water, an angel came to their rescue, and repeated the promise that Ishmael would grow to a powerful nation. They remained in the desert of Paran; and Ishmael took a wife from Egypt.—Abimelech, beholding with astonishment the growing prosperity of Abraham, concluded with him a treaty at Beer-sheba, and received from him the promise that he would always treat his descendants with friendship. Abraham dug wells, and secured them as his own by solemn ceremonies, planted a tamarisk, and invoked there the name of God.

1. And the Lord remembered Sarah as He had said, and the Lord did to Sarah as He had spoken. 2. For Sarah conceived, and bore to Abraham a son in his old age, at the time which God had indicated to him. 3. And Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him, whom Sarah bore to him, Isaac. 4. And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as

1—8. At last the time of fulfilment had arrived. During five-and-twenty years cheering assurances had brightened the gloom of Abraham's pilgrimage; he had risen to God by altars and prayers, and God had descended to him by visions and revelations; he had obeyed with spontaneous faith, and had received signs and pledges; a covenant had sanctified, and miraculous aid had protected, his life; land and posterity were promised, blessings guaranteed to his seed and to mankind; the child of faith had been announced both to him and to Sarah:—and the realization corresponded strictly with the promises. Sarah became a mother; she gave birth to a *son*, and exactly at the time foretold by God, in the hundredth year of Abraham's life; he was called Isaac; and was, by circumcision, introduced into the covenant of God on the eighth day after his birth. The extraordinary event, the prediction of which both parents had heard either with a secret smile of doubt or with open disbelief, could not fail to work a decided change on the minds of either; Abraham was henceforth purified from every wavering frailty; his character rose to sublime heroism; he had seen the power

God had commanded him. 5. And Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. 6. And Sarah said, Laughter hath God prepared for me; all who hear *it* will laugh with me. 7. And she said, Who would have said to Abraham, Sarah giveth suck to children? for I have born *him* a son in his old age. 8. And the child grew, and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned.—9. And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had born to Abraham, mocking; 10. And she said to Abraham, Expel this bondwoman and her son: for the son of

of nature conquered by the will of God (vers. 2, 7); and he turned for ever from the limited sphere of reality to the infinity of faith and hope. But Sarah's heart also was moved; she had received a precious proof of God's love; she warmed into a fervent emotion never before kindled within her; the son granted to her was indeed an object of laughter, but not caused by doubt or contempt, but by joy; she was certain that his birth would rouse in others the same surprise and astonishment; that he would be regarded as the offspring of a miracle; and as she had been leniently reproved by God for her sceptical smile, she now atoned for it by an exclamation echoing gratitude and confidence, submission and adoration. Her words assume a higher elevation; and if they are not poetical in form, they certainly breathe the enthusiasm of an enraptured heart. — When Isaac had passed safely through the first dangers incident to early childhood, a great feast of joy and thankfulness was celebrated; for his progress and his strength were matters of sacred anxiety. —It is known that infants, in the east, are generally weaned after the completion of their second year, and sometimes when they are three years old.

9—13. The assiduous care lavished on Isaac, and the fondness and pride with which he was reared, excited in Ishmael feelings of jealousy and bitterness. The latter had passed his sixteenth year (comp. xvii. 25), when the wild, ungovernable, and pugnacious character ascribed to his descendants, began to develop itself, and to appear in language of provoking insolence; offended at the comparative indifference with which he was treated, he indulged in mockery, especially against Isaac, whose very name furnished him with satirical sneers. Sarah was unable either to correct or to bear his conduct. Her heart, overflowing with gratification and felicity, was stained with vanity and pride, and she relapsed into her former loveless coldness. Seeing in Ishmael nothing but the contemptible son of an Egyptian bond-maid; forgetting that he was that offspring of her husband whom she had herself desired (xvi. 2); and, heedless of the blessings which God had pronounced upon him: she demanded his expulsion, together with that of his detested mother. When Sarah had made a similarly heartless request before his birth (xvi. 6), Abraham had shown the blameable weakness of unopposing compliance, unmindful of the child she was about to bear to him. However, at that time, he had scarcely hoped that this child was destined for any great purpose, and he merely regarded it as the representative and preserver of his name. But when Ishmael was born, the father's tenderness began to attach to his future a greater significance; for a while he considered him even as the long promised son, through whom all spiritual benedictions were to be fulfilled (xvii. 18); and when God repeatedly gave the prophetic assurances of the vastness of his future do-

this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, with Isaac. 11. And the word displeased Abraham much on account of his son. 12. And God said to Abraham, Let it not displease thee because of the youth and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah saith to thee, listen to her voice; for by Isaac shall thy seed be called. 13. And of the son of the bondwoman also I shall make a nation; for he *is* thy seed.—14. And Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread, and a skin of water, and gave *it* to Hagar, putting *it* on her shoulder, and the young man, and sent her away. And she departed, and wandered in the

minion (xvi. 12; xvii. 20), Abraham felt his heart bound by mighty ties to the firstling of his strength and his hope. When, therefore, Sarah demanded Ishmael's rejection, Abraham was roused to a deep indignation; his affections warmed for *his son*; and he refused this time to yield to his wife's impetuosity.—But the scheme which God pursued with Abraham demanded the subordination of the flesh to the spirit; the father was to be merged in the prophet; he no more belonged to himself, but to God and to mankind; his heart might bleed, but his will must obey. It was necessary, that the fate of Ishmael and that of Isaac should, from the beginning, be most distinctly separated; the elder branch was to acquire fame and wealth; the younger was to glory in piety and truth: avocations so radically different could scarcely be pursued within the same land; they indicate an absolute divergence of character; and though they may not necessarily engender enmity, they cannot secure sympathy;—the descendants of Ishmael, those roaming, adventurous, restless tribes, could not be satisfied with the narrow limits of Canaan; nor could the progeny of Isaac, the people of priests and prophets, wield the spear in the unfriendly desert against the straying wanderer. Therefore, God commanded Abraham to submit without reluctance to Sarah's demand, and henceforth to centre his hope and his care upon the younger son alone, born to propagate both his name and his faith. But although Sarah's request was ratified, it is not certain whether her conduct is justified in our narrative. Her wish may have been desirable; but it did not proceed from the right motive; it was dictated by petty jealousy, lest the son of the maid-servant should enjoy a part of the inheritance: in this sense Abraham understood her words; and he, therefore, condemned them.

14—21. Abraham furnished Hagar with the necessary provisions for the journey from Beer-sheba to Egypt, her native country; and he was himself eager to give her this last proof of love. Not the Hebrews alone used skin-bottles to carry water or to preserve wine; the Egyptians and Assyrians, the Greeks and Romans, employed them from the earliest times; they seem, in fact, to have been the first receptacles for liquids, until partially superseded and replaced by more convenient or more valuable vessels of gold, glass, earthenware, stone, porcelain, or alabaster. The monuments of Egypt, the sculptures of Mesopotamia, and the relics of Herculanum and Pompeji, afford ample opportunities to learn the shape and use of every variety of bottles, often surprising us both by their elegance and costliness. Those made of skin usually consisted of the hide of the animals, sewed up so that the projection of the leg and foot formed the aperture, which was closed with a plug or string; or so that the neck of the animal alone was left to open, to serve as the neck of the bottle. The skins of goats,

wilderness of Beer-sheba. 15. And when the water was spent in the bottle, she placed the young man under one of the shrubs. 16. And she went, and sat down opposite *him*, at a distance like a bowshot: for she said, I will not see the death of the child. And she sat opposite *him*, and lifted up her voice, and wept. 17. And God heard the voice of the youth; and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven, and said to her, What aileth thee, Hagar? Fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the youth where he *is*. 18. Arise, take the youth, and hold him by thy hand; for I shall make him to a great nation. 19. And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she

oxen, or sheep were generally, and those of asses and camels frequently employed. The vessels were carried on the back or shoulder, as may still be seen in many parts of Asia.

But Hagar lost her way in the trackless desert; and her provisions were exhausted before she had reached her destination, or had arrived at an inhabited place. And now her trials, severer even than those encountered at her first flight from Abraham's house, began anew; on the former occasion she does not seem to have suffered any physical want; she was sitting at a well of water, when the angel of God appeared to her, and ordered her to return to her mistress (xvi. 7); the reason of this command was, that Ishmael should be born under the sacred roof of the pious patriarch, that he might participate in the covenant of circumcision (xvii. 25), and thus be included in the blessings of the race from which he was descended. But this time she was tormented by thirst, the most fearful of all privations in the desert; a horrible death stared in her face; her pangs were a thousandfold multiplied by the distressing sufferings of her son, whose vital powers began to fail; and lest her heart should break at the sight of his death, she put him under a shrub, and sat down at some distance, whence she mingled her accents of despair with his cries of agony. That this awful visitation was intended as a punishment, is undoubted; if happiness and wretchedness are at all under the control of Providence, this enormous calamity of the mother and the son cannot have been accidental or unmeaning. However, their guilt is obvious; it was similar, like their suffering;—both had insulted those who ought to have been to them objects of respect and veneration; Hagar despised Sarah, Ishmael sneered at Isaac; the former boasted of her conception, the latter of his primogeniture; the one forgot the dignity of a prophet's wife, the other the higher promises vouchsafed to her son. Yet priority of birth establishes no truly higher claim; thus Cain, the first-born son of Adam, was less acceptable to God than Abel; and Esau was subordinate to Jacob. Not physical, but spiritual birthright constitutes the greater blessing; primogeniture may secure greater worldly possession, but it does not command that true felicity which is accessible to every man according to his virtue. This important truth, which a nation with an agrarian constitution, like that of Mosaism, easily forgets, is with great power embodied in Ishmael's history, every part of which is truth, and life, and instruction. "Touch not my anointed, nor harm my prophets" (Ps. cv. 15); this warning, received and heeded by Pharaoh and Abimelech, was neglected by Hagar and her son; and they endured the consequences of their stubborn pride.—But Ishmael was yet Abraham's son: when, therefore, an-

went, and filled the skin with water, and gave the youth to drink. 20. And God was with the youth; and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became a great archer. 21. And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran: and his mother took for him a wife from the land of Egypt.

22. And it was at that time, that Abimelech and Phichol the chief captain of his army spoke to Abraham, saying, God *is* with thee in all that thou doest: 23. And now swear to me here by God, that thou wilt not deal falsely with me, nor with my offspring, nor with my progeny: according to the kindness that I have done to thee, thou shalt do to me, and to the land wherein thou sojournest.

guish of death seemed nearly to overwhelm him, God sent His angel to rescue him; He had waited till all natural hope was passed, in order to show more clearly His immediate regard, and His miraculous aid. He opened Hagar's eyes, and she saw a fountain, which had before escaped her searching looks. As the wild desert was destined for Ishmael's unbounded home, he was not led back to Abraham's house, from which he was henceforward separated; but he took up his abode in the wilderness of Paran, became skilled in the art of the bow, in which many Bedouin tribes greatly excelled; and, in order to complete the estrangement from Isaac and his progeny, he took a wife chosen for him by his mother from Egypt, the land of her birth and the land of superstition.

22—34. Nobody had learnt more strikingly the preternatural care with which Abraham was guarded by God, than Abimelech, the king of Gerar (xx.). Expediency, therefore, not less than piety, urged him to seek a closer alliance with the patriarch; he was, no doubt, supposed to have heard and believed the promises received by Abraham regarding the possession of Canaan; and he was, therefore, anxious to secure the integrity of his own territory; he had a right to appeal to Abraham's sense of justice, and even to his gratitude (xx. 14—16); and he requested him to swear by that God, who was his hope and his protection. Abraham readily complied, and offered a solemn assurance. We may hence infer the historical fact, that, for some time at least, the southern part of Philistia was not attacked by the Hebrews. But, though the Philistines were never subjugated by them, it is certain that almost incessant hostilities were carried on between both nations. Thus, immediately after the conclusion of the alliance, a contention arose, which threatened to result in bitter enmity. Abimelech's servants had violently seized a well dug by Abraham. A more serious injury can scarcely be inflicted on a nomad chief rich in flocks and herds. The possession of a well in arid regions not unfrequently causes strife and warfare between whole tribes; and the protection of his wells is a prominent object of solicitude to an Arab sheikh. Abimelech, therefore, perceived fully the force of Abraham's complaint; he was indignant at the injustice of his slaves, of which he had never before been informed. But the patriarch, desirous of obtaining a guarantee which might, in future, shield his property against Abimelech's subjects also, conducted him to the well; and here concluded with him a treaty, by dividing animals, and passing between the dissected parts; but, in order to impart still greater solemnity to the ceremony, he gave besides *seven* lambs to Abimelech, to serve as a proof and a witness that the well belonged to himself.

Both when Abraham promised to Abimelech the safe possession of his land, and

24. And Abraham said, I will swear. 25. And Abraham reproved Abimelech on account of a well of water, which Abimelech's servants had violently taken away. 26. And Abimelech said, I do not know who hath done this thing: neither didst thou tell me, nor did I hear *of it*, but to-day. 27. And Abraham took sheep and oxen, and gave *them* to Abimelech; and they made both a covenant. 28. And Abraham placed seven lambs of the flock by themselves. 29. And Abimelech said to Abraham, What do these seven lambs *mean* which thou hast placed by themselves? 30. And he said, Surely, these seven lambs thou shalt

when Abimelech swore to Abraham undisturbed occupation of the well, the Philistine king was accompanied by the chief commander of his troops. This circumstance gives to the transactions a political character, and a more extensive scope. The alliance was not to be personal, nor should it depend on the individual virtues and inclinations of the two contracting parties, but was to be inherited to their descendants as a part of their political and social obligations.—The locality of Beer-sheba is evidently treated with peculiar interest, not in this passage only, but in several other parts of the Pentateuch. Here God appeared to Isaac, who built an altar to commemorate the vision (xxvi. 24, 25); the name is again explained by an occurrence similar to that related in our chapter (xxvi. 26—33); and here God gave encouraging promises to Jacob when he was on the point of leaving the territory of Canaan (xlvi. 1—4). From the latter passage, the significance of Beer-sheba is especially evident; it was the boundary-town of Canaan in the south; the point which separated the Holy Land from profane ground, not standing under the same immediate protection of God. It was, therefore, important, that the patriarch should in this place own property guaranteed to him by the heathen king; from this southern part, his descendants should spread northward till they reached Dan, at the foot of the Lebanon; and hence it was, in the time of Samuel, a place of public jurisdiction (1 Sam. viii. 2). But Beer-sheba acquired later another less desirable celebrity; it was, in the time of the prophet Amos, one of the chief seats of Hebrew idolatry; it is, in this respect, mentioned together with Samaria, Gilgal, and Bethel (Am. v. 5; viii. 13, 14); and we have here, therefore, the same admonitory anticipations, which have been noticed in almost all places connected with the patriarch's history. And lest there be any doubt, the text adds, that Abraham planted in Beer-sheba a tamarisk, and here "invoked the name of the Lord, the everlasting God." Nor is this notice without dogmatical importance; for the patriarch's example shows, that worship under "a green tree" is not under all circumstances criminal and objectionable, as might later have been wrongly deduced from the exhortations of the prophets; but only if it is addressed to idols, and not to God: we have here a practical instance of the doctrine: "In all places where I shall let my name be mentioned, I will come to thee, and I will bless thee" (Exod. xx. 21). — The town Beer-sheba existed not only after the exile, but in the time of Jerome and Eusebius; and even at present, about thirty Roman miles south of Hebron, ruins of houses are found at a place called Bir-es-Seba, with two deep wells of clear and abundant water.—The tamarisk especially was, besides the oak and the terebinth, employed to commemorate historical events; and on the

take of my hand, that it may be a witness to me, that I have dug this well. 31. Therefore he called that place Beer-sheba; because there they swore both of them. 32. Thus they made a covenant at Beer-sheba. Then Abimelech rose, and Phichol the chief captain of his army, and they returned into the land of the Philistines. 33. And *Abraham* planted a tamarisk in Beer-sheba, and there invoked the name of the Lord, the everlasting God. 34. And Abraham sojourned in the land of the Philistines many days.

ruins of the Kasr at Babylon stands a celebrated tamarisk, noticed and described by many modern explorers, and still venerated by the Moslems in its hollow and shattered trunk, because they believe, that it gave shade and shelter to the calif Ali after the battle of Hillah. The tamarisk occurs in numerous varieties in Egypt and western Asia; Syria and Palestine offer many specimens; in Arabia and the Peninsula of Mount Sinai grows the species of Tarafa which yields the manna; and other kinds of the same tree are highly valued for their medicinal properties. It attains the size of the olive-tree, and often of the oak; the wood is of great hardness; it is, therefore, used both for fuel and for vessels; and it is cultivated by the Arabians both for these purposes, and for the charcoal it yields, and the nut-gall it bears. Tamarisks have been found in the very locality of the ancient Beer-sheba. It seems, in some regions, to have been a sacred tree; for the Lesbian Apollo carried a branch of it in his hand; and the same custom was followed by his priests and votaries, when pronouncing prophecies.

CHAPTER XXII.

SUMMARY.—In order to prove the strength of Abraham's faith, God commanded him to sacrifice his son Isaac on Mount Moriah. He obeyed unmurmuringly: but when he was about to perform the fatal act, God ordered him to desist from it, and repeated emphatically all the promises before made to him. The patriarch returned to Beer-sheba, and here learnt, not long afterwards, the increase of his brother Nahor's family; one of his sons was Bethuel, whose daughter was Rebekah.

1. And it was after these things that God tried Abraham, and said to him, Abraham: and he said, Behold,

1—10. The life of Abraham presents a gradation of difficulties, powerfully typifying the multifarious struggles of the human mind for piety and happiness. He severed the ties which bound him to the land of his birth and childhood, to begin a new life in an unknown land. This was the first triumph of the spirit and of faith. He had scarcely arrived in the distant country, destined as his inheritance, when a famine compelled him to seek refuge in another happier land; but he murmured not, and he returned to Canaan with joyful hopes. This was his second triumph. He saw, without jealousy, the wealth of his kinsman Lot increase; and he permitted him to choose for himself the most desirable districts of the land. He rescued the property of the cities of the Salt Sea from the hands of mighty conquerors by a perilous expedition, and prayed for their preservation with an al-

here I *am*. 2. And He said, Take now thy son, thy only one, whom thou lovest, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I shall tell thee. 3. And Abraham rose early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clove the wood for the burnt-offering, and rose, and went to the place which God had told him. 4. On the third day, Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place from afar. 5. And Abraham said to his young men, Remain here with the ass; and I and the youth will go thither, and we

most vehement fervour. He believed in the promise of a son to be born to his old age; and by faith silenced the doubts raised by nature and experience. And when Sarah, at last, gave birth to a son, he considered himself as the progenitor of a great and happy nation; he looked through the wide vistas of time into the sunny future, when the whole earth would be blessed with truth through his seed; and a sublime joy uplifted his soul. While he was absorbed in these glorious thoughts, and saw that son, by whom they should be realised, growing up and blooming in youth, God commanded him to offer up that child of his love and his hope, that sun of his existence, as a burnt sacrifice on a mountain which He would show him. Who can describe the unspeakable pangs of the father? The whole history of Abraham had tended to this event, as the culminating point of his faith. God had shown preternatural love towards the patriarch; and the patriarch was required to make a superhuman effort to deserve it. He had more than once proved that his spirit was stronger than his human affections; it remained now to show that he avowed himself to be an instrument in the hand of a higher power, whose glory alone he desired. The readiness of Abraham to sacrifice his son has always been considered as the greatest deed of faith on record, and as an act of self-control at which the mind stands amazed. It became the basis on which the Israelites founded their claims of election among the nations, and the later Jews their hopes of atonement; it served the Christians as a type of redemption and salvation through faith; and it is in the religion of Mohammed glorified as the highest example and model of piety. It has, indeed, exercised a powerful and ennobling influence upon almost all nations and all times.

God *tried* Abraham. He proved him whether he was worthy of being the hope of mankind. Man learns the disposition of his heart best by its manifestations; for though the will may be virtuous, it often lacks the energy to mature into deed. This effort is the merit of man, and constitutes a chief part of his earthly task. God, therefore, sends trials to those He loves: He tried the Israelites immediately after they left Egypt at the waters of Marah, that they might convince themselves whether they were worthy of the miraculous redemption (Exod. xv. 25); He tried them by the edict concerning the daily gathering of the manna (Exod. xvi. 4); by the proclamation of the Decalogue (Exod. xx. 17), and by not extirpating all the heathens in Canaan, that they might show the strength of their belief by keeping aloof from contamination (Judg. ii. 22; iii. 1, 4, etc.); He sent even sometimes false prophets, performing miracles but preaching false gods and idolatrous doctrines, to try their fortitude in adhering to the Law (Deut. xiii. 4). But all such trials are sent only when weakness and sin preceded; although they may

will worship, and return to you. 6. And Abraham took the wood of the burnt-offering, and laid *it* upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and the knife; and they went both of them together. 7. And Isaac said to Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Behold, *here* I *am*, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where *is* the lamb for a burnt-offering? 8. And Abraham said, My son, God will look out for Himself a lamb for a burnt-offering: and they went both of them together. 9. And they came to the place which God had told him; and Abraham built there an altar, and arranged

end in great reward, they imply the possibility of still greater sin; and, therefore, man justly prays "not to be led into temptation." We must understand the great trial of Abraham from the same point of view; he had, from fear of his own life, twice risked the honour of his wife; and he might naturally have felt for his son an excessive love. By the triumph which he gained in this trial he was purified from his weakness, and he atoned for it. Hence, also, the enormity of the crime is obvious if man tries God, as the Israelites did more than once, when they desired to know "whether God was among them or not" (Exod. xvii. 7), a sin always counted among the most heinous forms of blashphemy.

Isaac, designedly described with all the terms of endearment by which Abraham could feel the vastness of the sacrifice, was to be offered openly on a mountain; but not in the country of the Philistines, where he then sojourned, but in the "land of Moriah," nearly a three days' journey from his home. The choice of the place is, therefore, evidently significant for the future history of Israel; it can scarcely be doubted that the land of Moriah describes the locality of and around Jerusalem. Moriah was the hill where later the temple of Solomon was erected; and where David had before built an altar at the command of God; it is lower than Mount Zion, which lies south-west of it, and which contained the citadel and the upper city; both were separated by the valley of Tyropœon, and connected by a bridge. In the north-west of Moriah is another hill, called Acra, which contained the lower city, and from which it was divided by a broad walk, filled up by the Asmoneans with earth, in order to join the temple with the city. The greater height of Zion gave, no doubt, rise to the almost constant usage of designating the mountain of the temple also by that name, which was even employed to describe the whole town; "daughter of Zion" is an ordinary poetical name for Jerusalem; Zion is frequently alluded to as the abode of God; and it may thus be accounted for that Zion also is called "the holy mountain," especially if we consider that it was the residence of the kings, the anointed of the Lord. The place of the future temple, where it was promised the glory of God should dwell, and whence atonement and peace were to bless the hearts of the worshippers, was hallowed by the most brilliant act of piety; and the deed of the ancestor was thus more prominently presented to the imitation of the descendants.

The affecting simplicity of the succeeding narrative will never fail to move and to elevate; its charm and truth are equally irresistible; it breathes innocence and purity; and is pervaded by a hidden pathos, flowing entirely from nobleness of sentiment and action. The greatest feat of heroism seems to be performed without an effort. Nor is the patriarch's calmness disturbed even when the harmless but

the wood, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. 10. And Abraham stretched out his hand, and took the knife to kill his son.—11. And the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here *am* I. 12. And He said, Lay not thy hand upon the youth, nor do to him anything: for now I know that thou fearest God, and hast not withheld thy son, thy only one, from Me. 13. And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked; and, behold, in the back-ground a ram was entangled in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and

soul-stirring question of the son reminds him of the approaching moment of horror and agony (vers.7, 8). He had conquered all selfishness and self-will; the strife between duty and passion was in him completely reconciled; he had attained that state which is the end of religion. By actually sacrificing his son, he could scarcely have displayed a higher degree of obedience than his determined and unwavering intention manifested; and the text is careful, and even circumstantial, in showing that firmness of purpose. He made himself all the preparations for the journey (ver. 3); he travelled more than two days, full of torment and anguish, before he reached the place of his trial (ver. 4); he concealed from his servants the true end of his journey, since they would have been unable to understand it (ver. 5); he made the last part of the way alone with his son, who carried the wood, while he himself took the knife and the fire (ver. 6); in this terrible loneliness, with the region of Moriah visible at a distance, the youth in his simplicity put that question which might well make a father's heart shudder (ver. 8); but Abraham remained unshaken; they arrived at Moriah—"and Abraham built there an altar, and arranged the wood, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. And Abraham stretched out his hand, and took the knife to kill his son." What more was necessary to prove the patriarch's faith and devotion? A thousand times had he felt the pangs which he was commanded to subdue; the end of the trial was obtained; it would have been cruelty and undue severity to require more. Abraham had conquered his weakness; and the action was considered as having been performed.

11—19. Isaac showed himself worthy of his father's virtue and mission. He appears not only as a model of filial obedience, of gentleness and meekness, but as capable of submitting to the inscrutable decrees of God. He was no more a child; for a long time had elapsed since the feast of his weaning (xxi. 34); he had, therefore, a consciousness of the impending death; but he yet patiently allowed himself to be bound on the altar. God interfered, and revoked the former command; and as a substitute for Isaac, a ram appearing in the background was burnt as a holocaust. Several Greek myths have been compared with this narrative; but the similarity exists but remotely in some external circumstances. Iphigenia, Agamemnon's daughter, was to be sacrificed to Diana, and the priest Calchas was on the point of performing the fearful ceremony, when the virgin was carried away by the goddess in a cloud, and an animal offering was presented in her stead. But the motive for the intended sacrifice was perverse and barbarous; Agamemnon had killed a stag sacred to Diana; and the incensed goddess would only be reconciled if the king's eldest and dearest daughter were offered to her. The future fate of Iphigenia was enveloped in mystery; it was only many years later, that her abode

offered him up for a burnt-offering instead of his son. 14. And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh [the Lord will look out]: as it is said this day, In the mount of the Lord one shall be seen. 15. And the angel of the Lord called to Abraham from heaven a second time. 16. And said, By Myself I swear, *is* the announcement of the Lord; indeed, because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thy only one: 17. Indeed, I shall bless thee abundantly, and shall multiply thy seed exceedingly, as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which *is* upon the sea-shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate

was accidentally discovered by her wandering brother Orestes: thus, the cruel command, devoid of purpose or moral end, was the result of divine wrath and caprice. But the trial of Abraham was as important as regards the doctrine which it involved, as it was pure in the motive from which it arose. For—this is a point of the greatest moment—the interference of God in this act teaches, *that not even the most enthusiastic and the most devoted piety requires or justifies human sacrifices;* that God, indeed, demands, that man should be prepared to renounce for duty and virtue what is dearest and most precious to him; but that He is satisfied with unhesitating readiness and obedience; that sacrifices of children are an abomination if designed to win God, or to appease Him; though occasions may occur when they are necessary to glorify His name; thus, the heroic mother, in the time of the Maccabees, gave an example later followed by Jews and Christians, who threw their children into the burning pile to save their souls, and to give honour to God. But He never commanded, nor approved of, the horrid rites of Moloch, to whom the first-born sons were mercilessly burnt (2 Ki. xxiii. 10). According to the Mosaic system, the first-born belonged indeed to God; but to be His priests, and to spread His Law. The trial of Abraham implies, therefore, no sanction, but the most emphatic and the most unconditional prohibition of human sacrifices.

The spot where the patriarch had seen his only son tied upon the altar, to expire under his own hand, was to himself and his descendants naturally a place of sacred awe; and it was to be distinguished as such by the meaning attributed to its name; it was henceforth to signify, "the Lord sees, or selects," and to recall His unrestricted sovereignty over all creatures, of whom He might choose for Himself those He thinks proper (ver. 8); but it was also to express and to perpetuate the consoling truth, that He in reality does not desire or select human beings for offerings. On the other hand, the piety of Abraham was to serve as an example to later generations; the name of the place suggested, therefore, the ready and cheerful worship there to be carried on in future times; it became a proverbial adage: "on the mount of the Lord, His people shall be seen or appear"; the descendants were incited to bring their offerings with greater cheerfulness if they remembered the torments which the patriarch had here to conquer in fulfilling the same duty; three times in the year, every Israelite was to attend before God in the place which He selected; the pious "go from strength to strength, till they appear before God on Zion" (Ps. lxxxiv. 8); and the worship on the holy mountain manifested the true theocratic citizen. Thus, the name of Moriah had the double import of assuring the Hebrews of God's mercy, and of encouraging them to pay to Him their tribute of devotion and gratitude.—And now, when Isaac was, as it were, a second time

of their enemies; 18. And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; since thou hast obeyed My voice.—19. And Abraham returned to his young men, and they rose, and went together to Beer-sheba: and Abraham dwelt at Beer-sheba.

20. And it was after these things, that Abraham was told, Behold, Milcah, she also hath born children to thy

born to Abraham, and almost "revived from the dead," when he was acquired by faith and merit, and had become Abraham's spiritual son as well as the descendant of his flesh: it was natural, that God should repeat all the blessings which were through him to be accomplished; and this is done in terms undoubtedly emphatic, if not enthusiastic; God swears by His own majesty to fulfil the glorious promises; He predicts a numerous progeny, and complete conquest over the enemies; but the happiness of the Hebrews should be crowned by the bliss which they would spread among all the nations, and, in a great measure, would be the reward of the patriarch's boundless obedience.—Beatified by those bright prospects, he returned southward—without exultation, and without pride.

20—24. The patriarch's career had reached its culminating point, beyond which it could not rise; the text hastens, therefore, to bring the narrative regarding his later years to a conclusion, and it immediately prepares the transition to the history of his son Isaac. It betrays an anxiety to show the uninterrupted connection of Abraham's house with his family in Mesopotamia, from where Isaac was to take his wife, Rebekah; and hence it inserts the genealogy of Nahor, Abraham's brother, who was married to Milcah, the daughter of Haran, and sister of Lot (xi. 27, 29). But though this genealogy is in strict harmony with preceding notices of a similar kind (xi. 26—29), it is not without peculiar difficulties, if compared with the great catalogue of nations contained in the tenth chapter. That it is composed with circumspect attention is certain from the fact that it bears a remarkable resemblance to that of the children of Jacob. Like the latter, Nahor has twelve sons; and in both cases eight are born by the lawful, and four by subordinate wives; and Ishmael also had the same number of sons. Now, among the twelve names are some which have previously been introduced in a perfectly different genealogical connection; and which seem, therefore, to imply another ethnographic tradition, provided we start from the principle, no doubt, on the whole, justifiable, that the names of genealogical lists represent tribes or nations. Thus Uz, who is here stated to have been the eldest son of Nahor, is, in x. 23, mentioned as the son of Aram; Aram himself, who occurs here as the son of Kemuel, Nahor's third son, and living, therefore, in the eleventh generation after Shem, is there recorded to be the immediate offspring of Shem; and if Chesed stands, as is probable, in connection with the Chaldees from whose country Abraham was asserted to have long since emigrated (xi. 28), an additional difficulty would arise. We have endeavoured to explain these perplexing circumstances in the larger edition of this work.—The book of Genesis introduces, then, two distinct branches of the great family of Arphaxad; the one represented by Abraham and his descendants, and including the Ishmaelites, Edomites, and Hebrews, together with the Ammonites and Moabites, and occupying the western districts of Canaan and the neighbouring tracts; and the other represented by Nahor and his descendants, and spread over many parts of the land between the Euphrates and Tigris, and beyond the former river.—The *Chaldeans* led long a roaming and

brother Nahor; 21. Uz his firstborn, and Buz his brother, and Kemuel the father of Aram, 22. And Chesed, and Hazo, and Pildash, and Jidlaph, and Bethuel. 23. And Bethuel begat Rebekah: these eight Milcah bore to Nahor, Abraham's brother. 24. And his concubine, whose name *was* Reumah, she also bore Tebah, and Gaham, and Thahash, and Maachah.

predatory life in the parts of Arabia Deserta, bordering on the southern course of the Euphrates almost down to the Persian Gulf; and though distinct both from the Babylonians and the people of Shinar, they generally occupied a part of the territory of the former. But as Terah, on his way from "Ur of the Chaldees" to Canaan, came to Carrhae, in the north-western part of Mesopotamia, it is obvious that the Chaldeans occupied, at a very early time, districts in the north-east of the Euphrates; and it is probable that, at a later period, emigrating from the north and joining their kinsmen in the southern parts of the Euphrates, they caused those stirring commotions which resulted in the overthrow of the Assyrians, and the foundation of the Chaldean empire under Nabopolassar (B.C. 625); from which time the Babylonians are constantly called Chaldaeans, and Babylon "the land of the Chaldees". Classical accounts record their diffusion to still more northern provinces, to the mountains of Armenia and the land of the Carduchi, and even near the Black Sea. Their nomadic habits may, indeed, even in the Biblical times, have brought them to those distant regions; but it is equally probable, that some of the tribes, preserving their hereditary love of liberty and their valour, after the conquest of Babylon by the Persians, sought refuge in the mountainous tracts of the north, where they found sufficient opportunities for indulging in their warlike tastes.

CHAPTER XXIII.

SUMMARY.—Sarah died at Hebron, in the 127th year of her life; and Abraham bought from Ephron, the son of Zohar, as a burial-place for her, and as an hereditary possession for his family, the cave of Machpelah, together with the field on which it was situated. After the purchase was concluded and duly ratified in the presence of the people of the Hittites, Abraham buried his wife in the cave.

1. And Sarah was a hundred and seven and twenty years old: *these were* the years of the life of Sarah. 2. And Sarah died in Kirjath-Arba, that *is* Hebron, in the land

1, 2. During the succeeding period of tranquil enjoyment, Abraham migrated from Beer-sheba, the southern extremity of the country, northward, and settled again in Hebron. Here he was afflicted by the death of his wife, who had faithfully shared his pilgrimages. "He went to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her." She had seen Isaac grow into manhood, for she survived his birth by thirty-seven years. If the fact that Sarah is the only woman whose age is mentioned in the Scriptures, is at all significant, it proves that with her a new epoch in the progress of the human race is supposed to commence (compare 1 Peter iii. 6). The chronology of her life, like that of Abraham, is stated in all its more prominent phases.—Sarah died in the *land of Canaan*; thus two facts, full of interest, are recalled to the reader's mind: she departed this life, not in the territory of the

of Canaan: and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her. 3. And Abraham rose from before his dead, and spoke to the sons of Heth, saying, 4. I *am* a stranger and a sojourner with you: give me the possession of a burying-place with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight. 5. And the children of Heth answered Abraham, saying to him, 6. Hear us, my lord:

Philistines (xxi. 34), or at any other place without the promised land; but yet this land belonged still to the Canaanites; no part of it was in the possession of the Hebrews.

3, 4. In securing a grave for his wife, Abraham directed his mind to the distant epoch of national greatness vouchsafed to his descendants. Though openly confessing that he was a stranger among the idolatrous children of Heth, he knew that Canaan alone could offer him a desirable resting-place; and he wished to be buried in the land to be hallowed by its future history. This sentiment was the result of the most exalted faith. For it is well known with what extreme degree of sacredness the graves of relatives were regarded; it is unnecessary to refer to the extraordinary precautions taken in this respect by the Egyptians, who, in order to secure to their dead undisturbed rest, erected gigantic edifices intended to defy the destruction of endless ages; who abhorred the idea of invading the abodes of the departed, and who scarcely knew a more disastrous misfortune than an interruption of the eternal rest of the dead. And though the Hebrews were far from sharing the superstition, that the existence of the soul is dependent on the preservation of the body; though, on the contrary, they were clearly conscious, that the former returns to God, while the latter is dissolved: they attached a sacred importance to the place of interment; they wished to be entombed in their native soil and among their own race; Jacob's corpse was, with pomp and solemnity, brought to the Holy Land; and Joseph enjoined on his brothers the same request; it was a part of the punishment which Moses suffered for his disobedience, that he was not buried in the land of his ancestors; and it was Joshua's reward to find his last repose among the children of his tribe. Regarded from this point of view, the earnestness with which Abraham sought a tomb for his family in the territory of Canaan, assumes a new significance. He had during his life severed every link which connected him with father, friends, or country; and he intended to make this separation eternal by being interred far from his birth-place and his countrymen. Though deeply anxious to see his son allied to no wife but one of his own family, which resided in Mesopotamia, he was as firmly resolved to be buried in no other country but that where he sojourned; for though he might hope that his kinsmen would adopt his religious convictions, he was certain that Canaan alone was selected as the land of salvation.—These remarks will, at the same time, show the fallacy of the opinion, that the purchase of the tomb was intended to establish a claim of the Israelites to the land of Canaan. The transaction here recorded has a civil, not a political character; and the tendency of the narrative is religious, not temporal (see pp. 236–238). The purchase is, indeed, based on the very fact, that Abraham had no legal right whatever to the soil of Canaan; he asked for an inconsiderable piece of ground, and paid for it a more than adequate sum. How could his descendants claim, upon such fact, the possession of the whole land from Dan to Beer-sheba!

5, 6. So little did the Hittites expect that Abraham, the stranger and pilgrim, should wish for an hereditary landed property, that they not even gave a direct answer to his request; instead of granting "the possession of a burying-place," they permitted

thou *art* a prince of God among us: in the choicest of our sepulchres bury thy dead; none of us will withhold from thee his sepulchre, that thou mayest bury thy dead. 7. And Abraham rose, and prostrated himself to the people of the land, to the children of Heth. 8. And he spoke with them, saying, If it be your mind that I should bury my dead out of my sight, hear me, and entreat for me Ephron, the

him to inter Sarah in any of their own family tombs; they even gave him unrestricted liberty to select the most convenient, the most desirable grave; there was not one among them who would not consider it an honour rather than an intrusion or burthen to be in death associated with his house. For Abraham had long since found in Hebron faithful friends; he was there allied with Eshcol and Mamre (xiv. 13); and had from there marched out on his expedition against the victorious eastern kings; but the respect which the Hebronites entertained for him, must have more and more deepened into awe when his later history was spread. Abimelech had publicly acknowledged, that the patriarch's every step was attended with manifest and supernatural blessing (xxi. 22); and *God* Himself had called him *a prophet*, and proclaimed the efficiency of his prayers to avert the sufferings of others (xx. 7). The Hittites designated him, therefore, "a prince of God"; and it is not impossible, that they regarded his residing amongst them as a protection and safeguard against Divine inflictions; that they were, therefore, eager to retain him in their town; and that the ready permission offered to him with regard to the burial, was not dictated by motives quite unselfish. Abraham's declaration: "I am a stranger and a sojourner with you," is distinctly opposed by them with the assertion: "Thou art a prince of God among us." Hence, they add with an emphatical force: "none of us will withhold from thee his sepulchre, there to bury thy dead"; for, in general, the ancient nations watched with extreme jealousy, that no stranger should be received in the tombs of their families; on the chiefs of the houses devolved the duty of watching over this sacred custom, though the spirit of hospitality characteristic of primitive tribes, generally prompted an exception in favour of guests, who possessed no ancestral graves in the country.

7—9. But Abraham abhorred the thought of allowing Sarah or himself to be buried in the vault of a heathen family. He, therefore, repeated his request, that he desired to have the hereditary and exclusive "possession of a burial-place"; his mind had evidently long since been occupied with this important matter; he had silently selected the spot where he wished to repose; he pointed out the place, and named its proprietor; he argued, that if they consented to suffer the bodies of his family in their own sepulchres, they might have the less objection to their being interred in a cave, consecrated by no association, situated in a retired part "at the end of a field," and, to whatever use it might be turned, not likely in any way to interfere with their general rights of property. But Abraham, in order to show in every possible manner that he wished to regard the burial-place as his absolute possession, and to avoid the least appearance of an obligation, insisted upon acquiring it by legal and public purchase, and upon buying it for a sum fully equivalent to its utmost value. Whenever Abraham refused presents, he was induced to do so by a great principle of right or religion: such was the case with the booty of the Sodomites; and such was the case with the burial-place desired for his family. — It is well known, that caves were, in ancient times, with predilection adopted for graves. The massive rocks in which they were either naturally found, or into which they were worked by art, guaranteed in an eminent

son of Zohar; 9. That he may give me the cave of Machpelah, which he hath, which *is* in the end of his field; for full money he may give it me for a possession of a burying-place among you.—10. And Ephron dwelt among the children of Heth: and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the presence of the children of Heth, of all who went in at the gate of his city, saying, 11. No, my lord, hear me: I give thee the field, and the cave that *is* therein, I give it thee; before the eyes of the sons of my people I give it thee: bury thy dead. 12. And Abraham prostrated himself before the people of the land. 13. And he spoke to Ephron in the presence of the people of the land,

degree that durability which was a principal requirement. Syria, Palestine, and Egypt abound in caverns peculiarly suitable for the purpose referred to. The mysterious darkness is but partially dispelled by the light admitted either by an opening at the top or on one side; for the vaults were hewn out either vertically or horizontally; they were generally, when capacious, divided along the sides into compartments, each of them large enough to receive one sarcophagus, of about six or seven feet in length; and some deeper than the rest, and subdivided into other chambers, or extended into passages. In some cases, the coffins rested merely on stone slabs arranged along the sides. Not unfrequently stairs were necessary to lead down into the caverns, and this was always the case when they were vertically excavated. In order to protect the graves, especially against the inroads of beasts of prey, a huge stone closed the entrance, which frequently, in the course of time, became perfectly indiscoverable. Graves, except those of distinguished persons, as kings and prophets, were never suffered within the precincts of the town; they were generally in open fields, as in the instance of our text, or in shady groves and gardens, and sometimes on hills and mountains.

10—16. Ephron shared the respect universally entertained by his tribe for Abraham. He eagerly offered him, not only the cave, but the whole field of which it formed a part; he declined every compensation, and called on his countrymen to be witnesses of his sincerity. Abraham, however, though acting throughout with extreme courtesy, the result of his meekness, unconditionally refused the proposal. His mind was filled with one great idea; and as the permanent possession of a burial-place aptly served to advance its realisation, he repeated that he was determined to acquire it by a legal and binding purchase, and he again offered the full equivalent in silver for the cave and the field. Ephron, unable longer to withstand the temptation, but reluctant openly to exhibit his avarice, with adroit cunning preserved the appearance of disinterestedness, whilst he was exacting a considerable sum from the rich emir: "What is," said he, "a piece of land worth four hundred shekels of silver between me and thee?" He seemed even impatiently to solicit the honour of furnishing the desired ground. But Abraham understood well his stratagem and its motives; and he at once paid the amount hinted at in current silver, such as merchants give and receive. "He *weighed* to Ephron the silver"; for coined money was unknown to the Hebrews before the captivity, when first Persian, and then Greek or Syriac currency was employed, till Simon Maccabæus (about B.C. 140) struck Jewish coins, especially shekels and half-shekels, specimens of which have been

saying, If thou only, Oh if thou wouldst hear me: I shall give *thee* money for the field; take *it* of me, and I will bury my dead there. 14. And Ephron answered Abraham, saying to him, 15. My lord, listen to me: a land *worth* four hundred shekels of silver, what *is* that between me and thee? bury therefore thy dead. 16. And Abraham listened to Ephron; and Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver which he had named, in the presence of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, current *money* with the merchant.—17. And the field of Ephron, which *is* in Machpelah, which *is* before Mamre, the field, and the cave which *is* therein, and all the trees that *were* in

preserved to us (see note on Exod. xxi.32) It is natural that almost all the ancient nations, which did not barter, or had ceased to barter, in corn, cattle, or other natural productions, animal or vegetable, but which used the metals as money, should for a long period have circulated them in solid pieces, till they arrived at the skill of working them into coins; an art which the Hindoos, Phœnicians, and Lydians, seem to have practised among the first; but even then the metal was estimated by its real, not a conventional value. For daily commerce rendered it, in very early times, necessary to provide pieces of a certain weight, as ready means of exchange; thus the Hebrews had whole, half, and quarter-shekels, kesitahs, and other coins, probably not controlled or sanctioned by the government; these pieces were perhaps provided with a mark to stamp them as genuine and as being the full weight, or to note them as "current money among the merchants": nevertheless, they were constantly weighed when employed in commerce, for which purpose the Israelites had scales attached to their girdles; and that custom was preserved even after the introduction of regular coinage, and is, in fact, extensively exercised by eastern merchants of the present day; whereas, on the other hand, in many parts of China and Abyssinia, the gold and silver circulates still in bars and ingots, the value of which is fixed by first estimating the quality, and then ascertaining the weight. If we consider that in the patriarchal ages the value of money was at least fifteen or twenty times greater than at present; that, for instance, it was not considered derogatory to the dignity of Samuel, or any "man of God," to accept a quarter of a shekel (or about 8*d.*) as a present; that, in the time of the Judges, the services of a household-priest were secured for the yearly salary of ten shekels, besides his food and garments; that the price of a slave was thirty shekels; that, even in the time of Nehemiah, a yearly tax of forty shekels was considered a heavy and tyrannical impost; that David bought from Araunah a threshing-floor and an ox for fifty shekels; and that Solomon paid 150 shekels for an Egyptian horse: we shall understand that Ephron scarcely brought a sacrifice in fixing the price of his field at four hundred shekels (or nearly fifty guineas), although the estimation would naturally depend on the extent and quality of the property; and although, in Solomon's time, Egyptian chariots were sold for 600, and vineyards yielded a produce of at least 1,000 shekels' worth.

17—20. A certain breadth and copiousness are manifest in the narrative; the chief points are repeatedly stated without any addition, either qualifying the sense, or rendering it more forcible. Abraham wishes "the possession of a burying-place;

the field; that *were* in all its borders around, passed over 18. To Abraham for a property before the eyes of the children of Heth, before all that went in at the gate of his city. 19. And after this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre, that *is* Hebron, in the land of Canaan. 20. And the field, and the cave that *is* therein, passed over to Abraham for a possession of a burying-place from the sons of Heth.

he reiterates the same words in his first reply to the Hittites; it occurs a third time when the purchase is concluded; and a synonym is introduced when the whole transaction is once more comprehensively stated. Further, it appears as if the text cannot, with sufficient emphasis, enjoin the fact, that all the Hittites were witnesses of the sale; Ephron is in their midst when Abraham publicly made the request; he negociates with the patriarch "before the ears of the children of Heth, in the presence of all the citizens"; and he grants the field "before the eyes of his countrymen"; Abraham takes care to give his reply in the same explicit manner; and to pay the money in the presence of the people, that every doubt and uncertainty may be removed. Lastly, the historian exhibits an extreme anxiety to enforce the fact that the field was *bought* by Abraham; it was acquired by full payment and current silver; and it was purchased for the amount demanded by the owner, without the least deduction. All this careful detail shows, on the one hand, the high importance which was attached to the transaction; and which was, on the other hand, almost necessary in a verbal purchase without a written contract. It is interesting to compare herewith the simple but expressive mode of transfer in the period of the Judges, when the proprietor, in the presence of ten elders of the people, took off his shoe and gave it as a symbol to the purchaser (Ruth iv. 1—9); or, in the times of Jeremiah, when the contract was written and the money weighed before witnesses, and the former was deposited in an earthen vessel "that it might last many days" (Jer. xxxii. 7—14). But it was always regarded as a want of true piety to offer to God what had been obtained without cost or sacrifice; and hence not only Jacob, though fugitive and wandering, bought the place in Shechem where he intended to erect an altar to God (xxxiii. 19), but even the mighty King David, for a similar purpose, purchased the spot from Araunah, the Jebusite, disdaining to "offer burnt offerings to the Lord his God of that which cost him nothing" (2 Sam. xxiv. 24; comp. 1 Chron. xxi. 24).

CHAPTER XXIV.

Summary.—Abraham, desirous that his son Isaac should marry a member of his own family, sent his steward to Mesopotamia, with the solemn injunction that, even if he did not succeed in his errand, he should on no account take for Isaac a wife from the Canaanites, nor return with him to the land of the Chaldees. The servant, arriving before Haran, saw Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel, who showed him ready and hearty civilities, and related to her family the arrival of the stranger. Her brother Laban hastened, therefore, to conduct him into the house, where he at once disclosed the end of his journey, and asked Rebekah for his master's son to wife, since he had proofs that she was destined for him by God. The parents, the brother, and the virgin consented; and having given presents to all, he returned to Canaan with Rebekah, who was accompanied by her nurse Deborah

and her maids. Isaac brought his wife into the tent before inhabited by his mother; and the love of the former consoled him for the death of the latter.

1. And Abraham was old, *and* advanced in years: and the Lord had blessed Abraham in all *things*. 2. And Abraham said to his eldest servant of his house, who ruled over all that he had, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh: 3. And I will make thee swear by the Lord, the God of heaven and the God of the earth, that thou wilt not take a wife to my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell: 4. But thou shalt go to my country, and to the land of my birth, and take a wife to my son, to Isaac. 5. And the servant said to him, Perhaps the woman may not be willing to follow me to this land: shall I then indeed bring thy son again to the land from

1. Bereaved of the wife of his youth, Abraham felt that his life was hastening to its goal; he had attained the 140th year (xxv. 20); and his strength showed symptoms of decline; he had "become old and laden with years"; he had reached double the age later allotted to man, and at the approach of which the most glorious of his descendants experienced the same infirmities (1 Kings i. 1). But the patriarch had not struggled in vain. He could look back upon a career, obstructed indeed, and complicated, but marked out by the wisdom of God, and performed with the aid of His love. "He was blessed with all things."

2—9. But the most precious treasure he possessed was his son. He loved him not only with the affection of a father, but with the purity of a prophet; the human feelings were heightened by a spiritual interest; he saw in Isaac not only *his* son, but the son of Divine promise; not only the propagator of *his* name, but the medium by which the name of God should become the light of mankind. When, therefore, Isaac had reached his fortieth year, and had been declared the heir of the house (ver. 36), he wished to secure for him a wife worthy of being connected with his great destination. He pledged his faithful steward by the holiest oath which at that time could bind the conscience of man, by the sign of covenant between God and the chosen family (xvii. 10, 11), and made him swear by the name of "the Lord, the God of heaven and the God of earth," that he would not take for his son a wife from the daughters of the Canaanites. Though he had lived in their land for half a century, he still regarded himself as a stranger; he abominated their vices; and would never endanger the future of his race by associating with tribes doomed to perdition by their own perverseness. He could hope that the members of his own family would be more accessible to the truths of his new faith, or would at least not impede its progress; they seemed, indeed, to have spontaneously shown a tendency towards it by their emigration from Ur of the Chaldees and their settlement in Haran, where they were less exposed to the contagious influences of idolatry, where Terah had lived and died, and where Abraham himself had for some time sojourned. Though the family of Nahor had not renounced the false gods, they were ready to acknowledge the true one when they saw His working and His miracles. Bethuel and Laban did not deny that God had guided the steps of the steward (ver. 51); far from opposing His will, they submitted to it with reverence and cheerfulness (ver. 52). The descendants of Terah

where thou camest? 6. And Abraham said to him, Beware that thou dost not bring my son thither again. 7. The Lord God of heaven, who took me from my father's house, and from the land of my birth, and who spoke to me, and who swore to me, saying, To thy seed I shall give this land, He will send His angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife to my son from there. 8. And if the woman is not willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath: only bring not my son thither again.—9. And the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and swore to him concerning that matter.—10. And the servant took ten camels

belonged to the blessed branch of the Shemites; the germ of truth slumbered in them; and it required but the genial influence of example and instruction to bring it into blossom.—Abraham was decided and absolute in his command; but this firmness was not the result of fear but of faith. When, therefore, the steward objected the possibility that no virgin might be found willing to leave her native country, and asked whether, in such emergency, he might go back with Isaac to Mesopotamia: the patriarch replied with a power and a fervour which indicated his earnestness, and he interdicted any such step in the most emphatic manner (ver. 6). But though moved, he was not agitated; he preserved his usual composure; he had inclosed his hopes in his innermost heart; his reliance in the Divine promises was unshaken; he was certain that the servant's journey would be successful; and that the same power which had turned his own heart to forsake his country and his friends, would work the same effect on another mind also. God had not only promised, but sworn to him, that his posterity should inherit the land of Canaan; the "God of heaven" would send "His angel" to assist the messenger in his design; and He had not rescued his son from death on Mount Moriah to let him perish without progeny. The patriarch commanded, therefore, his servant to return to Canaan without a wife for Isaac, if none should consent to follow him; he released him, in such case, from his oath and from every obligation; for he was certain, that God, who had blessed him with a son in his old age against all precedent and probability, would fulfil His decrees, even if he himself saw no natural ways. The life of Abraham was so extraordinary that he almost constantly required the wings of faith; but faith had become his element, and the very sphere in which he moved and lived.

10. The steward having, in the solemn form demanded by Abraham, sworn the most scrupulous adherence to his wishes, entered at once upon his distant journey. The fullest confidence was placed in him by his master; for he was the "eldest servant of his house"; he had unlimited disposal over all domestic affairs; he was initiated in every property, and was responsible for its safety. Such stewards were appointed in all greater households, and especially in the royal palaces; they frequently represented, and sometimes succeeded, their masters; they enjoyed a degree of freedom and authority which almost raised them above the rank of subordinates; and they generally repaid this generous confidence by an exemplary faithfulness. — The servant certainly travelled with a respectable caravan; ten camels were required for himself, his companions, and the numerous

of the camels of his master, and departed; and every precious property of his master was in his hand: and he rose, and went to Mesopotamia, to the city of Nahor. 11. And he made his camels kneel down without the city by a well of water at the time of the evening, at the time when the women come out to draw *water*. 12. And he said, Oh Lord God of my master Abraham, I pray Thee, send me good speed this day, and show kindness to my master Abraham. 13. Behold, I stand *here* by the well of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water: 14. And let it be, that the maiden to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may

presents which he took with him for the future bride and her relations; thus furnished with every good and precious object that might appear worthy the representative of a wealthy emir, he journeyed eastward to that part of "Aramæa which lies between the two rivers," Euphrates and Tigris; nor did he tarry or rest till he arrived in sight of the town which he had selected as the first place to execute his commission (comp. ver. 49). It appears, that Nahor, Abraham's brother, had later followed his father Terah from Ur of the Chaldees to Haran or Carrhæ (see p.203), perhaps at the time when Abraham left Mesopotamia, and the aged father desired to have near him at least one of his children; for Haran, his third son, had died before him. Abraham had, after his arrival in Canaan, remained in communication with his relatives; therefore, the steward directed his steps at once to the "town of Nahor," or to Carrhæ, as Jacob did a considerable time later.

11—14. The servant had, in Abraham's house, passed his years in a school of piety. He had seen, that every action of life was coloured by faith; that every event was regarded as the result of Divine wisdom; that blind chance or necessity were nowhere acknowledged. He felt, therefore, that but one line of conduct was possible to him. Considering himself as a mere instrument of Providence, he committed the success of his undertaking entirely to the will of God, convinced that prudence may indeed devise, and perseverance pursue plans; but that human exertion is in vain without the blessing and protection of God. He, therefore, certainly acted with a premeditated design; he halted before the town, at the principal well belonging to it, a place where the daughters of the inhabitants generally assembled, and whither their duties called them at certain times of the day. Even the daughters of the chiefs seldom fail to appear there with their vessels; the well or cistern is for the females what the gate is for the men; here they indulge in friendly conversation and exchange their news; here they are, for a short interval, released from much of their usual oriental restraint; and since shepherds also repair hither to water their flocks and herds, it serves, in many cases, as a convenient place for meetings and appointments, and may, in others, be the scene of strife, where old feuds and enmities are brought to an issue. Cisterns were generally closed with a large, heavy stone, which was removed by the united strength of the shepherds (xxix. 8); while excavated wells were made more easily accessible by steps leading down to them. The place where the following event happened, seems to have belonged to the latter description (ver. 16).

But how could the messenger know the maidens who belonged to the family of Terah? And how could he learn their character

drink; and who will then say, Drink, and I shall give water to thy camels also: *let* her *be* she whom Thou hast appointed for Thy servant, for Isaac; and thereby I shall know that Thou hast shown kindness to my master.—15. And it happened, before he had finished speaking, that, behold, Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel, the son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder. 16. And the maiden *was* very beautiful in appearance, a virgin, and a man had not known her: and she descended to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up. 17. And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, taste a little water of

and disposition, the qualities of their hearts and minds? Except by the assistance of God, he felt, it was impossible for him to ascertain in one interview what ordinarily requires a long and searching examination, and to be sure to bring home to his master a wife able to bestow and to enjoy happiness. He, therefore, turned his thoughts to the God of his master Abraham, and prayed that "He might send him good speed," or that "He might let him find" a wife worthy of Isaac; he asked this as another mark of Divine mercy, and another miracle. He determined to be guided by a kind of oracle, and asked the interposition of God, that He might put into the mouth of the chosen virgin a certain answer to a certain question. She should excel in a virtue, possessing indeed a wide scope, and regarded, by the Orientals, as one of the chief characteristics of a noble mind. Ready civility towards a stranger is generally the result of a generous feeling. It is a service done to a helpless fellow-man, both without an obligation as the motive, and without hope of compensation as the end. But in countries where hospitality belongs to the ordinary duties, and where it is invested with the character of a religious observance, it easily becomes a mere matter of form; it is converted into cold politeness, preserving much of the busy officiousness, without the genuine warmth, of the original virtue. The prudent messenger determined, therefore, to try the depth and spontaneous kindness of the maiden's heart: if she not merely complied with the request made to her, but, from her own accord, volunteered another and still greater service, he could safely draw the conclusion, that the feeling of love was with her, not simply the reflex of national customs, but the invisible sun beaming through her mind, and freely bringing forward the blossoms of sterling goodness.

15—27. Scarcely had the scheme been formed in the steward's mind, when it began to progress towards realization. A maiden approached unveiled, strikingly beautiful, with the bloom of innocence in her countenance. Quickly and actively she performed her task; "she went down to the well, filled her pitcher, and ascended." The watchful servant's attention was at once riveted upon her; and he hastened to address to her the decisive request. Her answer was more than barely satisfactory. She expressed herself with an emphasis proving the genial glow of her mind. "I will draw water for thy camels also," she said, "till they have finished drinking." She felt a delight in the performance of the task. Round the margin of the eastern wells are watering troughs, or gutters, generally of stone, which are filled with water when animals are led thither to drink. The virgin emptied the pitcher without delay into the gutters, hastened again down

thy pitcher. 18. And she said, Drink, my lord: and she hastened and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him to drink. 19. And when she had finished giving him to drink, she said, I shall draw *water* for thy camels also, until they have finished drinking. 20. And she hastened, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again to the well to draw *water*, and drew for all his camels. 21. And the man *was* wondering at her in silence, to know whether the Lord had made his journey successful or not. 22. And when the camels had finished drinking, the man took a golden nose-ring a beka in weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten *shekels'* weight of

to the well to fetch more water, and rested not before all the camels had drunk to satisfaction. If it is remembered that camels, though endowed in an almost marvellous degree with the power of enduring thirst, drink, when an opportunity offers, an enormous quantity of water, it will be acknowledged that the trouble to which the maiden cheerfully submitted required more than ordinary patience. The steward was deeply affected; he saw his plans advance with unexpected rapidity; the girl was not only beautiful in appearance, but active, kind-hearted, and obliging; she had completely fulfilled the oracle which he had proposed to himself: but he had forgotten one important consideration. It could not, so it occurred to him, be his master's wish to have a wife from the *land*, but from the *family* of his father; Mesopotamia was inhabited by many tribes, which descended, like the Canaanites themselves, from Ham; and which, like the latter, showed no disposition to adopt a purer religion; and Terah and his family lived in Haran only as strangers and immigrants. The messenger was, therefore, still "wondering at her in silence, to know whether the Lord had made his journey successful or not" (ver. 21). His heart was, indeed, filled with hope; and he took, therefore, from his treasures rich golden trinkets intended for presents; but only when he heard from her own lips that she was Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel, and the grand-child of Abraham's brother, Nahor; he was certain that he had obtained the end of his mission; he gave to her the presents; and broke forth into a fervent expression of gratitude towards the God of Abraham, who had shown him "His mercy and His truth," and had so manifestly guided his steps.

Who will not dwell, with unmingled delight, upon the pleasing picture which our text draws of the faithful messenger's character? Meek and humble, he had imbibed many of the virtues which distinguished the patriarch himself; we admire the beautiful harmony of his mind and his heart; the placid dignity of his conduct; the manly energy tempered by prudence; and the confiding faith strengthened by reflection. The independent position which he enjoyed in Abraham's house, rendered this remarkable development of his character possible; and the Mosaic laws concerning servitude, were designed to preserve the servants fit to return into society as useful citizens. But "the God of heaven and of earth," on whom the patriarch relied (vers. 3, 7) was, to the steward, only the "God of his master Abraham"; the one felt and understood God, the other acknowledged merely His power; the one was convinced by revelations and visions, the other was awed by miracles and signs.

gold: 23. And said, Whose daughter *art* thou? tell me, I pray thee: is there room *in* thy father's house for us to stay in? 24. And she said to him, I *am* the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Milcah, whom she bore to Nahor. 25. And she said to him, We have both straw and provender enough, and room to stay in. 26. And the man bowed down, and prostrated himself to the Lord. 27. And he said, Blessed *be* the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of His mercy and His truth: the Lord hath led me in the way to the house of my master's kinsmen.—28. And the maiden ran, and told these things in her mother's house. 29. And Rebekah had a brother, and his name *was* Laban: and Laban ran out to the man, to the well. 30. And when

Golden trinkets were abundantly used among most of the Asiatic nations from early times; and those which Abraham's servant offered to Rebekah (ver. 22) belong to the most common ornaments. The nose-ring chiefly, though not exclusively, worn by men, and applied by American tribes also, is inserted in the cartilage of the nose, either in the middle or in one side; it is often of considerable size, reaches generally beneath the mouth, and not always contributes to enhance the beauty of the face. It is here stated as having the weight of a *beka* which is half a shekel, or a Greek drachm. The nose-rings worn at present by the Oriental women are often of ivory, or of gold; they are hollow to render them less inconveniently heavy, and sometimes set with jewels, mostly a ruby between two pearls.—Bracelets are such favourite ornaments with Oriental ladies that they are not only worn by them in an unusual quantity, but are promised by Mohammed among the rewards of piety; sometimes the whole arm from the wrist of the hand to the elbow is covered with them; sometimes two or more are worn one above the other; and they are not unfrequently so heavy that they almost appear to be a burden to the fair owners; two of them are here stated to have weighed ten shekels of gold; certainly a liberal present. Men also liked to adorn their wrist or upper arm with bracelets. On the Assyrian sculptures scarcely any person of wealth or station, or even any deity, appears without them. They were generally worn on one arm, and sometimes on both. Those who were unable to purchase gold or silver bracelets, contented themselves with procuring them of copper, ivory, horn, or glass. They were not always made with great skill or taste; they had not, in all cases, a lock; and often consisted merely of a large broad ring, through which the wearer forced the hand. The Egyptian bracelets, however, are in many instances, not without elegance; and those represented on the Assyrian monuments, or found in the excavations of Mesopotamia, are scarcely inferior to them either in taste or in costliness.

28—31. When Abraham's steward intimated his wish to stay in the house of Rebekah's father, the maiden, evidently rejoiced, readily replied, that their house was abundantly provided with every necessary commodity (ver. 25), and hastened home to announce the stranger. She naturally communicated her interview first to her mother Milcah, who was not slow in making the preparations for the reception of the guests. In countries where the firstborn son enjoys predominant

he saw the nose-ring and the bracelets upon his sister's hands, and when he heard the words of Rebekah his sister, saying, Thus spoke the man to me; he came to the man, and, behold, he stood by the camels at the well. 31. And he said, Come, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore dost thou stand without? and I have cleared the house, and room *is* for the camels.—32. And the man came into the house: and he (Laban) ungirded his camels, and gave straw and provender for the camels, and water to wash his feet, and the feet of the men who *were* with him. 33. And food was set before him: but he said, I shall not eat, until I have spoken my words. And he said, Speak. 34. And he said, I *am* Abraham's servant. 35. And the Lord hath blessed my master exceedingly; and he is become

influence in all domestic affairs, it is not surprising that he should often, on important occasions, represent his father; he is regarded with respect, and his advice is listened to with deference. He possesses already, during his father's lifetime, a part of the authority which later devolves upon him by right. Instead of Bethuel, therefore, his son Laban went out to welcome the strangers. It has, from early times, been asserted that the character of this man is, in the Biblical narrative, represented as mean and base in every respect. But an impartial examination of the text leads to a result entirely different. We cannot, indeed, have any *antecedent* reason to expect a monster of moral depravity in Laban. If the brother of Rebekah, the future wife of Isaac, in all relations of life, were actuated by sordid motives and selfish ends, we can scarcely see a reason why Abraham should have so eagerly desired to form a matrimonial alliance with his family, and how Jacob was justified in choosing for his wife the daughter of that very man. Passing, however, to the narrative itself, we find that as soon as he heard that a stranger had arrived, he hastened towards the well (ver. 29) from a generous impulse, and without awaiting further details. Rebekah, who accompanied him on the way, only found time to inform him again that the stranger had asked the hospitality of her father's house (ver. 23); these were the only words which she had to repeat to him; for the prayer which the steward uttered to God, and in which he mentioned his master Abraham, and "the house of his master's brother" was, no doubt, pronounced by the servant to himself beyond the hearing of Rebekah; but Laban had gone to invite the stranger even before he had been made acquainted with his request; he was, therefore, impelled by no other feeling but duty; nor is it any derogation to his character if the liberal presents which he then saw prepossessed him in favour of the guest; they were to him a proof both of his distinguished social position and of his generous mind; they were, indeed, to him a convincing sign that he was "blessed of the Lord," from whom comes every property and worldly happiness; and he addressed him with a gentle reproach for not having thought better of his hospitality, and for not having at once accompanied his sister to the house, which was open and ready to receive him and his companions (ver. 31).

32—49. When the preliminary duties of an Oriental reception were performed, and Laban invited his guests to partake of the meal speedily prepared for them, the

great: and He hath given him flocks, and herds, and silver, and gold, and men-servants, and maid-servants, and camels, and asses. 36. And Sarah, my master's wife, bore a son to my master after her old age: and he hath given to him all that he hath. 37. And my master made me swear, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife to my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell: 38. But thou shalt go to my father's house, and to my family, and take a wife to my son. 39. And I said to my master, Perhaps the woman will not follow me. 40. And he said to me, The Lord, before whom I walk, will send His angel with thee, and will make successful thy way; and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my family, and of my father's house: 41. Then shalt thou be clear from my adjuration, when thou comest to my family; and if they do not give thee *one*, thou shalt be clear from my adjuration. 42. And I came this day to the well, and said, Oh Lord God of my master Abraham, if, I pray Thee, Thou wilt make successful my way which I go: 43. Behold, I stand by the well of water, and let it be, that the virgin who cometh forth to draw *water*, and to whom I say, Give me, I pray thee, a little water of thy pitcher to drink, 44. And who will say to me, Both drink thou, and I will

steward, unwilling to delay the execution of his charge unnecessarily for a single moment, refused to touch food before he had stated the purpose of his journey. When Laban, yielding to his wish, consented to deviate from the usual rule of cordial hospitality, the messenger delivered himself of his commission in a narrative graced by every charm of simplicity, rivalling the most beautiful episodes of the Homeric writings, and pervaded by a healthful spirit of sustained calmness: the repetitions which it contains, are like the echo of truth; and the measured step with which it advances, carries it to its aim with enhanced dignity. Two points especially are impressed with evident force. First, the steward appears deeply moved by a sense of responsibility. He not only dwells on the promise he has made to his master, but describes the oath with which he has confirmed it, as belonging to the awful class connected with an imprecation and curse. He is so agitated at this solemn thought, that he impatiently urges an immediate reply, so as to be able to turn, if necessary, without delay to some other branch of Terah's family (ver. 49). The second feature, equally prominent, is the steward's entire submission under the Divine guidance. The whole narrative bears a religious character; it is based on the principle of the direct interposition of God, from the beginning, the wealth of Abraham, down to the last reply of Rebekah; it shows emphatically the "mercy and truth" which God had manifested to him in every regard (ver. 27); and, therefore, in concluding his address to the parents and the brother of the maiden, he appro-

also draw for thy camels: *let* her *be* the woman whom the Lord hath appointed for my master's son. 45. And before I had finished speaking in my heart, behold, Rebekah came forth with her pitcher on her shoulder; and she descended to the well, and drew *water:* and I said to her, Let me drink, I pray thee. 46. And she hastened, and let down her pitcher from her *shoulder*, and said, Drink, and I shall give thy camels also to drink. 47. And I asked her, and said, Whose daughter *art* thou? And she said, The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bore to him: and I put the nose-ring in her nose, and the bracelets upon her hands. 48. And I bowed down, and prostrated myself to the Lord, and blessed the Lord God of my master Abraham, who had led me in the right way to take the daughter of my master's kinsman to his son. 49. And now, if you will do kindness and truth to my master, tell me: and if not, tell me; that I may turn to the right *hand*, or to the left.—50. And Laban and Bethuel answered and said, The thing proceedeth from the Lord: we cannot speak to thee bad or good. 51. Behold, Rebekah *is* before thee, take *her*, and go, and let her be the wife of thy master's son, as the Lord hath spoken. 52. And when Abraham's servant heard their

priately entreats them to exercise the same "mercy and truth" (ver. 49).

50—52. Bethuel and Laban enter completely into the spirit of the steward's narrative; they acknowledge in his journey the finger of God; and, submitting without hesitation to His unmistakable will, they refrain from every reflection which prudence might suggest. The expectation of Abraham was fully realized. The spark of piety which slumbered in the family of Terah was roused and kindled by the recital of the obvious miracles, which they could not but recognise. Among those who yielded to the Divine signs, Laban is mentioned as the first. His soul cannot, therefore, have been either hardened or depraved. Easily accessible to the highest truths, he was ready to express them in words and deeds. He, further, in this domestic matter, exhibits a zeal, disclosing another laudable quality of his character. Brothers are always represented as particularly anxious to watch over the honour, and to secure the happiness, of their sisters. The brothers of Dinah resented the wrong done to her with sanguinary vehemence. Absalom could not extirpate from his heart the burning hatred against Amnon who had disgraced his sister Tamar. In questions of marriage especially, the active interest of the brother was regarded as a duty; and indifference on such occasions was branded as a moral offence. Nor is this feeling restricted to the times and countries of polygamy, which divides the attention of the father between many diverging obligations, and leaves to the sons the care for their sisters. It is, therefore, a

words, he prostrated himself before the Lord to the earth.— 53. And the servant took out trinkets of silver, and trinkets of gold, and garments, and gave *them* to Rebekah: and valuable *presents* he gave to her brother and to her mother. 54. And they ate and drank, he and the men who *were* with him, and they stayed over night: and they rose in the morning, and he said, Send me away to my master. 55. And her brother and her mother said, Let the maiden abide with us *a few* days or *a week of* ten *days*; after which she may go. 56. And he said to them, Do not delay me, for the Lord hath made successful my way; send me away that I may go to my master. 57. And they said, We

proof of Laban's well-regulated mind, that he took a prominent part in the arrangements regarding his sister Rebekah; and from this reason, no doubt, the text mentions his name even before that of his father Bethuel (ver. 50), and his mother Milcah (ver. 55).

53—61. When the relatives of Rebekah had consented to her alliance with Isaac, and had said to the messenger: "Behold, Rebekah is before thee, take her, and go, and let her be the wife of thy master's son"; the matter was considered as fully arranged. The maiden herself was not consulted at all; the question later addressed to her was not put with a view to elicit her decision regarding the marriage, but regarding the time of her departure. We shall not attempt to distort the meaning of the text in order to deny this fact. Rebekah as well as Laban and Milcah accepted the presents of Abraham's servant; the former submitted thereby implicitly to the arrangement of the latter, and she followed the stranger into the distant land, without having ever seen her future husband. But in order to explain such remarkable conduct, we need not be satisfied with reminding the reader of the general Oriental customs, of which this narrative offers a faithful picture; we need not merely insist upon the fact, that daughters are, in the East, regarded as the property and chief wealth of the father, who disposes of them as he likes; and that they submit to his will and authority without murmuring. These premises may deceive the historian into inferences perfectly antagonistic to the position which the Old Testament assigns to the women. It may mislead to the belief, that the Hebrew women were regarded as mere objects; and that the Hebrew wives occupied an undignified place in the household—than which nothing could be more erroneous, as we have attempted to prove on more than one occasion. The very narrative of this chapter shows more than any other argument the high and even sacred importance, which was attached to the conscientious choice of a wife. It is unnecessary to prove that which every part of the text clearly proclaims. Therefore, the obvious explanation of the fact above referred to is, that Rebekah was, as much as her parents and her brother, struck with the manifest interference of God; that she likewise saw in the request of Abraham's messenger the ruling of a higher will, and that her heart was equally accessible to the truths of a purer religion. The answer: "From the Lord proceedeth the matter; we cannot speak to thee bad or good" (ver. 50), was offered in the name of Rebekah also. It was, therefore, superfluous to ask her formal consent; Bethuel and Laban, who knew her disposition and character, were convinced, that she would not disregard signs which they felt compelled to respect; and in other matters, not decided by the Divine interposition, they

shall call the maiden, and enquire at her mouth. 58. And they called Rebekah, and said to her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go. 59. And they sent away Rebekah their sister, and her nurse, and Abraham's servant, and his men. 60. And they blessed Rebekah, and said to her, Thou *art* our sister, be thou *the mother* of thousands of myriads, and let thy seed possess the gate of their enemies.—61. And Rebekah rose, and her maids; and they rode upon the camels, and followed the man: and the servant took Rebekah, and departed.—62. And Isaac came from the way of the well Lahai-roi; for he dwelt in the country of the south. 63. And Isaac went

left her unrestricted freedom (ver. 57). And lest there should remain the least uncertainty, it is later expressly added, that Isaac loved Rebekah, and that he was through her consoled for the grief caused by the death of his mother (ver. 67). Thus, our tale may, at the same time, be intended to teach the lesson, that a special providence of God watches over the holy bond of matrimony, and that He always unites those destined by Him to form "one flesh," however separated they may be from one another, and however accidental the ways may appear by which they are brought into connection.

It is customary, that before the conclusion of a marriage-contract, a price should be stipulated, which the young man is required to pay to the father of the bride. But as the whole transaction of the servant's mission has a perfectly spiritual character, such stipulation would have been inappropriate; for it would have made the success dependent on an external agreement, while it was to be decided by the Divine will alone. The marriage-price, therefore, is, in this case, very aptly represented by the voluntary gifts which the messenger offers to the bride and her parents, and which, though no doubt valuable and generous, were a present rather than an exacted price. Whether this circumstance also has a practical tendency; whether it hints at the propriety of abandoning the frigid and undignified custom of a marriage-price; and whether it intends to divest it at least of the mercenary sordidness into which it is apt to degenerate: this we can rather feel than prove from the words, although it is in full harmony both with the pure spirit of this narrative, and with the enthusiastic admiration with which elsewhere a virtuous wife is praised as *priceless* (Prov. xxxi. 10; see on xxix. 13—20).

Incited to a speedy return by the rapidity with which God had made him succeed in his mission (ver. 56), the faithful steward, unwilling to indulge in inactive enjoyment, longed to announce his triumph to his master. But as it was usual to allow a certain period to elapse between the bethrothal and the marriage, as a matter of propriety as well as of prudence, the bride was consulted, and her decision was regarded as final: and when Rebekah, revering the Divine oracle, declared her readiness to follow the messenger without delay, she was dismissed by her relations with a fervent blessing, implying a numerous, powerful, and ever-victorious progeny; and she departed, as it behoves the daughter of a wealthy house, accompanied by her nurse and her maids.

62—67. Isaac was the worthy offspring of the chosen patriarch. He ever displayed imperturbable harmony of the soul, unmoved by the greatest and dearest sacrifices; his mind was, by nature, calm and placid; modest and reserved; he was susceptible of that happiness which

out to meditate in the field towards the evening: and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and behold, camels *were* coming. 64. And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she alighted from the camel. 65. And she said to the servant, Who *is* this man who walketh in the field to meet us? And the servant said, It *is* my master: and

flows from sentiment; his heart was warm and sensitive; his piety internal and unostentatious; he inclined to reflection and prayer; his affections were strong without impetuosity; his impressions profound without exuberance. His destinies corresponded with his character. They form the exact medium between the history of Abraham and that of Jacob. He spent his life without the deeds of the one and the sufferings of the other; he was not, like either, compelled to distant wanderings; after the grand trial of his youth, the course of his life was, on the whole, calm and even. Without labour or care, he inherited a large fortune, while both his father and his son acquired property but gradually, and the latter not without laborious exertion; he obtained a pious and beautiful wife without the least personal effort, by the care of a provident father and a faithful servant, whereas, Jacob had, for the same purpose, not only to undertake a perilous journey, but to submit to a long and toilsome servitude; and though we shall soon have occasion to show many parallels in the destinies of Isaac and Abraham, the history of the former exhibits a certain pause in the progress of the narrative; it contains few new elements, and advances but little the Hebrew theocracy; its tendency is rather to secure the old ideas, than to introduce new ones; and its chief interest consists in proving how the enlightenment of Abraham had, by habit and temperament, become with Isaac an impulsive feeling; and how the acquirements of the mind had become the property of the heart.

With this character of Isaac alone the last part of this section harmonises. His thoughts were, no doubt, engaged with the messenger's journey; after the death of his mother, his heart felt a void which he longed to fill up by a sentiment equally holy and absorbing; his pensive nature indulged in meditation on this momentous point; but his happy disposition shielded him against agitating anxiety, and his piety taught him to hope. It is not impossible, that Isaac, like the messenger, had proposed to himself a certain oracle; that this is expressed in the rather obscure phrase: "he went out to meditate in the field"; and that the arrival of the caravan just at that moment was to him the fulfilment of the sign. It is evidently necessary to include Isaac in the same circle of religious resignation which embraces all the other persons connected with this mission, from Abraham to Laban; Isaac was personally more deeply concerned in it than all the others; he had before all to *believe* that the bride brought to him from a foreign land would really sympathise with his own feelings; and that she was selected for him by the immediate interposition of God: a *sign* was, therefore, naturally expected by him with, at least, the same justice as by the servant of his father.

It is an eastern custom, prevalent in many parts to this day, that women, when riding on the road, and meeting strange men, descend from their animals, as a mark of respect offered to the stronger sex. European travellers have frequently been the objects of such salutations. The conduct of Rebekah is, therefore, in no way extraordinary, if we but translate correctly: "she alighted from the camel." When Rebekah heard from the servant that her future husband was approaching towards them, "she took the veil and covered herself." It is evident, from this context, that her application of

she took the veil, and covered herself. 66. And the servant told Isaac all things that he had done. 67. And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her: and Isaac was comforted after his mother's *death.*

the veil stands in some necessary connection with the presence of Isaac; and we find this connection easily in the well-known eastern custom, that the bride is, on the day of marriage, brought veiled to her bridegroom, a custom which alone explains the possibility of Laban's deception practised on Jacob. Nor must we forget that the class of eastern out-door veils here mentioned does not, like others in common use, merely cover the face, but, like a kind of large wrapper, nearly the whole form, rendering it impossible to recognise the person; while the veils worn in the house, resemble much those of our age and country, forming a part of the head-dress, and usually thrown back. Another sort of veil, common in Egypt and Syria, and represented even on very ancient Asiatic monuments, commences beneath the eyes and falls down over the greater part of the body; but it is uncertain whether the Hebrews applied it. The material of the veils varied from the coarsest to the finest and most exquisite texture; and a suitable veil was among the costliest articles with which brides were necessarily furnished by their parents. It is clear, from our passage, and from many others, that among the Hebrews unmarried ladies appeared publicly without a veil; even married women did not veil themselves before strangers in their own houses; but, out of doors, the latter probably took the veil as conscientiously as it is at present deemed indispensable by all Eastern ladies of honour and virtue. It may, however, be inferred from our text (ver. 65), that even married ladies, when travelling, were not always scrupulous in the application of the veil; for it is certain that Rebekah regarded herself as the lawful wife of Isaac from the moment that her parents had expressed their consent. — It appears that Abraham had, in the mean time, changed his abode; he had left Hebron, and pitched his tents more southward, near that celebrated well which had become sacred to him by the Divine appearance here granted to Hagar; this change must have taken place before the departure of the messenger, who, otherwise, would not have come so far southward on his return from Mesopotamia. — When Isaac heard the wonderful history of that journey, his heart, spontaneously inclining to the softer feelings, considered Rebekah as the wife assigned to him by the manifest will of God; he loved her with a double affection; and for the first time, after the death of his mother, after three mournful and solitary years, joy re-entered his bosom, and cheerfulness his dwelling.

CHAPTER XXV.

Summary.—Abraham, after having become the father of six sons from Keturah, and having sent them away with presents eastward, died in the 175th year of his life, and was buried by Isaac and Ishmael in the cave of Machpelah (vers. 1—11).—Ishmael begat twelve sons, who became the progenitors of as many tribes of the mixed Arabs, and died at the age of 137 years (vers. 12—18).—After a barrenness of twenty years, Rebekah gave birth to twins, Esau and Jacob, of whom a Divine oracle predicted that the younger would rule over the elder; and, in fact, Esau, who became a wild huntsman, sold to Jacob, a nomadic shepherd, his birthright for the trifling compensation of a pottage of lentiles (vers. 19—34).

1. And Abraham took again a wife, and her name *was* Keturah. 2. And she bore him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah. 3. And Jokshan begat Sheba, and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, and Letushim, and Leummim. 4. And the sons of Midian, Ephah, and Epher, and Enoch, and Abidah, and Eldaah. All these *were* the children of Keturah.—5. And Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac. 6. And to the sons of the concubines whom Abraham had,

1—4. There existed among the Hebrews the tradition that certain tribes of Arabia were connected with them by descent and close relationship. This popular belief, no doubt based on a genuine historical reminiscence, is embodied in the offspring here attributed to Abraham, and born to him by a subordinate wife, Keturah. Accustomed as we are to the Biblical mode of representing ethnographic relations by means of genealogies, we can find no difficulty in the insertion itself of this list. But a great perplexity arises from the circumstance, that it contains names elsewhere introduced in perfectly different connections. For Sheba and Dedan, here traced to Abraham, and mentioned as the sons of Jokshan, are in the great catalogue of nations (x. 7) enumerated among the Cushites and described as the sons of Raamah. We have on former occasions noticed, and attempted to account for, this seeming discrepancy; nor do we believe this matter hopelessly involved in confusion. The following remarks may assist in arriving at a conclusion:—1. The universal list of nations itself acknowledges that a part of the Sabæans were Shemites; for it includes them among the thirteen tribes descended from Joktan, who is likewise a son of Eber, and is regarded as the ancestor of the chief stock of the population inhabiting the Arabian peninsula (x. 28). How they could be introduced both as Cushites and as Joktanites has been explained in its proper place (see p. 171). 2. These earlier Sabæans, connected with Shem by only four intermediate links, namely, Arphaxad, Salah, Eber, and Joktan (x. 24, 25), were believed to have later received a considerable increase from descendants of Abraham, who, settling in the districts of Sabæa, were gradually also called Sabæans, although their later origin was not forgotten, and is here strikingly represented by the circumstance that Sheba was not the son of Abraham, but connected with him only through Jokshan. In the lists of Genesis, the tribes are sometimes designated according to their local rather than their genealogical relations (see p. 194). 3. In a similar manner we may understand the introduction of Dedan among the Abrahamites, though he had before been mentioned as the grandson of Cush (x. 7). The abodes of the Dedanites were, moreover, so comprehensive, and centred round two districts so different in many respects that the supposition of a double population of different descent is both natural and plausible (see p. 172).—Thus we may uphold the agreement between the various genealogical notices; it is unnecessary to regard Jokshan and Joktan as identical, by which assumption the difficulties would not be materially lessened; and we must admit, that the theory on which these lists are based is historically not improbable. This conclusion is confirmed by a remarkable circumstance to which we shall presently have occasion to refer (see p. 314).—We are enabled to ascertain the identity of but very few of the descendants of Keturah.

However, the territory and character of the Midianites are sufficiently known; they

Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son while he yet lived, eastward, to the land in the east.— 7. And these *are* the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, a hundred and seventy-five years. 8. And Abraham expired, and died in a good old age, and full *of years*; and he was gathered to his people. 9. And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron, the son of Zohar, the Hittite, which *is* before Mamre; 10. The field which Abraham had

were both commercial and warlike, nomadic and agricultural; lived partly in the peninsula of Mount Sinai and partly in the East of the Jordan, near the land of the Moabites; and as they were early engaged in a very extensive caravan trade between Syria, Arabia, and Egypt, they are sometimes called Ishmaelites, who, being the chief masters of the commerce of the desert gave the name to the Arabian merchants generally (comp. Comm. on Exod. p. 23).

The great age of Abraham has long before been emphatically urged (xxiv. 1); about forty years previous to the period to which this portion seems to refer, he had felt the debility of advancing years approach (xvii. 17), and the birth of Isaac was considered a miracle, beyond the natural order of events (xviii. 11), since Abraham, exhausted in strength, seemed to verge to the grave (Hebr. xi. 12). It has, therefore, been deemed incredible, that the patriarch should, after Sarah's death, have become the father of six other children, as it is certainly not the intention of the Hebrew historian to represent the ancestors of the Arabic tribes as born by a Divine miracle. The usual manner of explaining this difficulty is by supposing that, in reality, those children, though born long before, are now only mentioned, because, if inserted in an earlier place, they would have interrupted the continuity of the narrative. But this conjecture would be at variance with the principle of monogamy everywhere rigidly adhered to in the history of the patriarchs; and though Keturah, like Hagar, was only a secondary wife, Abraham *took her* (ver. 1); she was not, like the latter, given to him by his lawful wife (xvi. 2, 3). It may, therefore, be supposed that, according to the author, it was only the patriarch's matrimony with Sarah which was not blessed with offspring, and required the direct intervention of God, while he was generally not destitute of the power of generation, as was proved by the birth of Ishmael from Hagar. As God predestines the couples (p. 309), and as children are a gift of His favour (Ps. cxxvii. 3): the want of progeny does not affect the indissolubility of the matrimonial bond (comp. 1 Sam. i. 8).

5, 6. But though Abraham begot more children after Sarah's death, he did not disregard the superior rights of her son Isaac, born by the love and grace of God, his only lawful heir, because intended to propagate truth and faith. And as a mark of the higher dignity of his posterity, and as a symbol that to them belonged the promised land, he received all the wealth of his father, while the other brothers were dismissed with presents into the eastern regions, to seek new abodes, and to found separate communities.

7—11. Though Abraham lived to see the birth of twin grand-children (ver. 26), the text relates his death in this place, in order to prepare the way for the connected narrative of Isaac's life.—Filial affection united once more the two eldest sons of Abraham; the wild and ungovernable Ishmael left for a short time the solitude of his deserts, and joined the gentler Isaac in paying the last debt of love to their father; the duty of conveying the relative safely

purchased of the sons of Heth : there was Abraham buried, and Sarah his wife. 11. And after the death of Abraham, God blessed his son Isaac; and Isaac dwelt by the well Lahai-roi.

and solemnly to his eternal resting-place is, especially among eastern nations, regarded as imperative and most sacred; and one generation later, we shall again see two brothers, scarcely less different in character, harmoniously unite in fulfilling the same mournful obligation (xxxv. 29). — The blessing of God descended, by right of inheritance, upon Isaac; and immediately after his father's death, he felt the gloriousness of his mission by the abundance of his privileges.

II.—THE HISTORY OF ISHMAEL AND ISAAC.

CHAPTERS XXV. 12 TO XXVIII. 9.

12. And these *are* the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid, bore

12—18. The traditions of the Arabians invariably insist upon the distinction of three successive elements of their population. They hand down the memory of a primeval race, which comprised many heroic and powerful tribes; which was long extolled in song for its marvellous feats, commanding wealth, and daring designs; but which became extinct at a very early period, partly by the wrath of the gods, and partly by the invasion of other warlike nations. The new immigrants were the direct descendants of Kachtan (who corresponds with the Joktan of Scripture), and called themselves "the Arabs of the Arabs," a certain proud denomination, describing the nobility and purity of their origin. Through Yarab and Jorham, the sons of Kachtan, they became the founders of the principal and most powerful kingdoms of the peninsula, especially those of Yemen and Hejaz. But later, twelve other tribes, the descendants of Ishmael and a daughter of Modad, king of Hejaz, are asserted to have partly joined the pure Arabs, and partly occupied the vast deserted tracts of Arabia and of the northern districts. These Ishmaelites, both on account of their later origin, and of their descent from a foreign father, were tolerated rather than acknowledged, and were called the *mixed* Arabs (Mostarabi; see p. 245). Now, it appears, that the Biblical statements regarding the population of Arabia, entirely coincide with those national traditions. The first and oldest tribes may correspond with those enumerated among the Cushites (in x. 7); the pure Arabs are the Shemitic descendants of Joktan (x. 26—29); and the mixed tribes are both the Ishmaelites here mentioned, and the other Abrahamites, traced to Keturah as their mother (vers. 1—4). So much is certain, that the Ishmaelites are, in our chapter also, carefully separated from the other inhabitants of Arabia, and none of their tribes is connected with another ancestry. This significant fact adds considerably to the historical value of the Biblical genealogies.

Among the Ishmaelites, the first and by far the most powerful, are the NABATÆANS, who are represented by Ishmael's eldest son NEBAJOTH. They belong to the few remarkable tribes of Arabia which have passed through a historical development, and offer epochs of progress and decline. It appears, that they originally applied themselves chiefly to breeding of cattle; "the rams of Nebajoth" are mentioned as

to Abraham: 13. And these *are* the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations:

offerings acceptable in the temple; they preserved long this simplicity of life; they are described by ancient historians as inhabiting tents in a vast desert tract without streams or fountains; they then had no houses, neither did they cultivate the soil; they watched with anxious jealousy over the preservation of their traditional customs; their chief wealth consisted in an abundance of horses, camels, and sheep; the principal articles of their food were flesh and milk, besides the free vegetable and other produce of the country, of which they esteemed especially pepper and wild honey; their districts brought forth most of the southern fruits, except the olive; they worshipped the sun, to which they offered daily sacrifices; they were famous for prudence in the arrangement of their domestic affairs; prodigality and carelessness were punished by the state, while economical and circumspect individuals who increased their property were rewarded; habits of industry were, therefore, eminently fostered; indolence existed in so limited a degree that they had among them very few slaves; even wealthy families served themselves, or offered their services to each other; and a love of liberty was thus naturally engendered. Although they had a monarchical government, the king was responsible for his conduct, and might at any time be called to account by the people; their sovereigns bore usually the names of Aretas or Obodas; they were assisted by a vizier or chief minister, who was called "the king's brother"; to obey a foreign power was regarded by them as more disastrous than annihilation; and they exerted their intelligence efficiently to defy the attacks of conquerors. For this purpose, they built an almost impregnable town, *Petra*, in one of the rockiest parts of the chain of Mount Seir; this is probably the Biblical *Selah*, also called *Arke* or *Rekem*, in the present Wady Musa, 300 stadia south of the Dead Sea, and ninety-eight Roman miles north of the Elanitic Gulf, overtopped by the memorable double-peaked Mount Hor, on which Aaron died, but which is only seen from the eastern side of the town. It lies between rugged cliffs of red sandstone, and rocky ravines of 50 to 250 feet in height, surrounded by barren and streamless deserts, but less obstructed by the rocks in the north and south. The plain in which it is situated, and which seems wrung from the mountain, is only about one mile square, but is sufficiently watered; the breadth of the valley of Wady Musa varies from 150 to 12 feet, and is in some parts so overhung by cliffs that the rays of the sun cannot penetrate. Through this ravine, about a mile in length, was formerly the only avenue to the town; and that access was the work of human hands. It contains piles of tombs, with columns and pyramids in various styles of architecture. Behind this necropolis, a bold arch connects the two sides of the ravine. Along the valley flows the little river Wady Musa; its bed was formerly paved; several bridges were constructed over it; its sides were enclosed with stone quays; in the rainy season, it is augmented by two smaller streams coming from the gorges of the northern mountain; and it supplied the town with water through many small canals. Into this fortress of Petra, the Nabatæans brought their wives, children, aged people, and their cattle, whenever a hostile invasion threatened; and for their own defence and safety they planned a device which always proved successful. In the most sterile part of the dreary desert, they dug vast subterranean water-reservoirs, with very narrow mouths, which could easily be stopped and concealed, while the interior gradually widened to the dimensions of a hundred feet square. Into these regions they marched at the approach of the enemies, who, excruciated by thirst, either suffered immense losses, or hastened to return. But gradually the Nabatæans applied themselves to commerce also; they imported especially incense and spices from

the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth; and Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam, 14. And Mishma, and Dumah, and

Arabia Felix, and disposed of them lucratively in the marts of the Mediterranean, for instance, at Rhinocolura (El Arish); and the port Leuke Kome, which belonged to Petra, and was situated near Elath, on the Elanitic Gulf, facilitated their speculations and transactions. — It appears from the Assyrian monuments, that Sennacherib attacked the nomadic portion of them, and carried off an enormous amount of horses and camels, oxen and sheep. But the first serious danger, more fully recorded by profane writers, threatened them at the end of the fourth century before the present era. Antigonus, king of Syria (in B.C. 312), sent his general Athenæus against them with 4,000 light-armed troops, and 600 cavalry. When this commander approached, the greater part of the Nabatæans were assembled at a fair, annually held for commercial purposes in the interior of the land. Athenæus, therefore, suddenly attacked Petra at night, killed a great number of the people, and carried away very considerable booty in frankincense, myrrh, and silver. The Nabatæans, speedily informed of the disaster, met the hostile army, and routed it almost completely. A second expedition of the Syrians, under Demetrius, was unsuccessful in consequence of the prudent preparations made by the Nabatæans when informed of the contemplated invasion. — But the ancestral habits imperceptibly changed; commerce produced wealth, and wealth engendered luxury and immoderate ambition; sumptuousness succeeded the primitive simplicity; at last, in the time of Alexander's successors, no longer content with the slow gains of trading, and tempted by their indomitable courage, they attacked, as pirates, the merchant vessels which passed through the Elanitic Gulf. Thus, the peaceful shepherd tribes had degenerated into lawless robbers, whose audacity it was necessary to curb and to punish by repeated expeditions. It appears, however, that those checks had the salutary effect of leading them back to more honest pursuits; and though the new channels of trade opened through Egypt increased the competition and imposed the necessity of greater exertions, they regained wealth and respect by their commercial industry. They showed friendship and lent assistance to Judas and Jonathan Maccabæus, whose full confidence they enjoyed (B.C. 163, 161). About the beginning of the present era the Greek philosopher, Athenodorus, who stayed some time in Petra, spoke with admiration of the harmony and unity in which they lived, of their excellent laws, and the readiness with which they were obeyed. They long maintained their independence, in spite of many struggles; though Pompey sent from Syria an army against them and defeated them, they were not materially weakened; an expedition, in the time of Augustus, under Ælius Gallus, governor of Egypt, was without decided effect; but they were subdued, in the reign of the emperor Trajan (105 after Christ), by Cornelius Palma, the governor of Syria. But Petra remained one of the chief centres of Arabian trade. Trajan's successor, Hadrian, seems to have bestowed material benefits upon the town, which in grateful acknowledgement, was called by his name, on coins, some of which have been preserved. More caravans than ever before traversed the vast desert. Under the protection of Roman garrisons unwonted security was afforded to commercial enterprise; the roads became more accessible and invited foreign traders; regular routes of caravans were formed; from Elath, or Leuke Kome, the harbour at the Elanitic Gulf, one road ran to Petra; another from this metropolis to Jerusalem, Gaza, and along the coast of the Mediterranean; and a third from the same point more directly northward to Damascus. On all these lines, especially along the eastern frontier of Arabia Petræa, towns sprang up, embellished by the increasing wealth of the inhabitants, and still exciting admiration

Massa, 15. Hadad, and Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah: 16. These *are* the sons of Ishmael, and these *are*

in their colossal ruins. It was, no doubt, during this period that Petra was adorned with those magnificent architectural works which render that town one of singular interest for the antiquarian and the traveller. The tombs in the ravine leading to the city to which we have above alluded, then received their comparatively modern additions of Ionic columns and other Roman-Greek ornaments; in another ravine-like but broader valley is that astounding structure *El-Khuzneh*, probably used as a temple, one of the wonders of the east, the façade of which consists of "two rows of six columns over one another, with statues between, with capitals and sculptured pediments." This edifice shines still in all the freshness of colour, and attracts notice by the elaborate detail of sculptural ornament; but its interior is merely a lofty hall, with a chamber on each of its three sides. Behind the El-Khuzneh the eye is struck by many beautiful and varied façades, leading to apartments excavated in the cliffs, used either as tombs, or as temples, and later, as churches; but in a wider part of the valley, on its left side, is the splendid Greek theatre, entirely hewn out of the rock, 120 feet in diameter at the base, with more than thirty rows of seats, in the native rock red and purple alternately, and holding upwards of 3,000 spectators, surrounded with tombs, and overgrown, on the sides, with the wild fig-tree and the tamarisk. In the ancient site of Petra itself, every variety of ruins, of streets, houses, temples, and palaces, bespeaks the vanished glory of a town once splendid and wealthy; they are, further, "the palace of Pharaoh" (*Kasr Faron*); the isolated column likewise bearing the name of the Egyptian monarch (*Zub Faron*), and indicating the former site of a large pillared temple; the remains of triumphal arches; the colossal columns of a depraved Corinthian or Doric order, hewn out of the solid rock, and still forming part of the native mass; and majestic colonnades, giving the whole base of the mountain the appearance of a vast pile of grand architecture. Astounding and almost numberless excavations are everywhere wrought in the front of the mountain, in its ravines and recesses, and even in the precipitous rocks around it, in many cases one rising over the other, and sometimes several hundred feet above the level of the valley, with steps cut in the solid rocks; some widely conspicuous, others hidden in the most inaccessible cliffs. These excavations shine in all the magic of variegated, though not uniformly bright, colours, equalling in softness those of flowers, or of the plumage of birds, and exhibiting a gorgeous crimson, streaked with purple, and often intermixed, ribbon-like, with yellow and blue; they are of the most various dimensions, and serve the most manifold purposes. Some are small niches, perhaps intended for votive offerings; others are designed for tombs and exhibit an endless variety in size, workmanship, and style: they consist of spacious chambers with recesses, sometimes near the ceiling, at the height of eight or ten feet, and often adorned, in the front, with architectural embellishments of astonishing richness and striking beauty. The cloister (*deir*) at the north-western extremity of the cliffs, also hewn out of the rock, with a most splendid façade, and a vast urn on the summit, is accessible through a long and tortuous ravine, by a path, five or six feet broad, and steps cut in the stone with immense exertion; is surrounded by ruins; covered with inscriptions in the Sinaitic character, crosses, and figures of the wild goat or ibex, indicating its sacred character; but rather modern in effect. All this engages and deserves the research of the historian. — That Petra is identical with Kadesh is not probable. — Long was the Roman power prevalent in these districts, which, in the fourth century, were included under the general name of Palestine, or separately known as Palestina

their names by their villages and by their tents; twelve princes according to their nations. 17. And these *are* the

Tertia, or Salutaris; but when, in consequence of confusion and anarchy, the dominion of the Romans declined, the safety and regularity of Arabian commerce were again endangered; plunder and vexation were rife; the Bedouins obtained unrestrained sway; for many centuries the name of the Nabatæans disappears from the annals of history; a bishop of Petra, Theodorus, is indeed mentioned so late as the year 536, when he attended the council of Jerusalem; but the town was destroyed in the time of Mohammed; and was re-visited, for the first time, by some crusaders, and a few single adventurous travellers; till recent explorers, Seetzen and Burckhardt, Robinson and Laborde, and others, made us again familiar with a tribe, not only distinguished by commerce and agriculture, but long excelling in poetry and music.—The northern part of the valley contained, no doubt, the greater number of the houses which, however, formed a striking contrast with the public edifices; for they were for the most part mean and frail; hence but few traces at present indicate their former existence; of some, indeed, a kind of substruction has remained; while the site of others is discernible only by the broken pottery which covers the surface; the houses themselves having crumbled away; the very rubbish having been washed down by the mountain torrents which often ravage the plain; and even the rocks themselves constantly mouldering away.

The extent of the territory inhabited by the Nabatæans is very differently stated by various ancient writers; but the following reconciliation may be attempted. As long as they applied themselves simply to pastoral pursuits, they seem to have lived chiefly in the south and south-east of Palestine, in or near the districts of the Edomites. Their close and early connection with the latter is recognised in the book of Genesis itself; for Esau is represented as marrying the sister of Nebajoth, Mahalath or Basemath (xxviii. 9; xxxvi. 3); and hence we may explain the fact that Petra, or Sela, during a certain period, either belonged or was considered as belonging to Idumæa; for Amaziah, king of Judah, "slew of Edom, in the valley of Salt, ten thousand, and took Selah by war" (2 Kings xiv. 7). As their herds and flocks increased, they wandered more and more southward, till they joined very near the abodes of the Kedrei, with whom they are, indeed, mentioned together not only by Isaiah (lx. 7) but by Pliny (v. 12). The attacks to which their increasing wealth exposed them, rendered the building of the fortified town, Petra, necessary, where, in time of danger, the defenceless part of their population could be kept in safety. This town received a still greater importance when they began to engage in trade and to accumulate vast property. It is but natural that their commercial activity should have led them still more southward to the coast of the Red Sea, to the centres of the transit trade from India, Arabia, and Egypt; and thus they gradually obtained power at the head of the Elanitic Gulf, with Leuke Kome as their harbour, from where the goods where brought northward to Petra. Hence Diodorus Siculus places them on the Lainites Sinus, a bay of the Elanitic Gulf; and assigns to them many villages, both on the coast and in the interior; and Strabo mentions them in the same southern districts; but adds, that they spread northward into Arabia Petræa, where Petra was recognised as their capital. Since their caravans traversed many districts beyond their immediate habitations, they were imperceptibly induced either to settle, or to wander with their cattle, more northward; and thus we find, that a three days' journey south of the Jordan, brought Judas Maccabæus into their territory; they had then spread to the provinces of Gilead, and some of them lived near Bozrah and Karnaim. But their

years of the life of Ishmael, a hundred and thirty-seven years; and he expired and died; and was gathered to his

progress seems, at that time, to have been retarded by the Idumæans, their kinsmen, against whom Judas Maccabæus found it necessary to undertake a most sanguinary war. This appears to have had the effect of causing a conciliation between the Idumæans and Nabatæans; for it is testified not only by Josephus, but by Strabo, that those Idumæans from whom Herod sprang were called Nabatæans. Now they extended their abodes more and more to the north and the east; and hence Pliny mentions them as contiguous to the Scenite Arabs, of whom they formed a very important part. As they increased in influence, no doubt other, less powerful, tribes joined them to enjoy their protection, and all were of course known under the common name of Nabatæans; and thus it is explicable that both Josephus and Jerome relate, that they lived from the Euphrates to the Red Sea. Nabat is, in fact, on the one hand, still the name of a swampy district, forming a part of the "marshes of the Chaldæans" (*palustria Chaldææ*), between Wasith and Basra; and, on the other hand, a town Nabat occurs two days south of El-Haura, near the Red Sea. But after their subjugation by the Romans under Trajan, the Nabatæans were gradually repelled from the more northern and eastern territories; and therefore Ptolemy describes the kingdom of Arabia Petræa as bounded on the east by the desert, on the west by Egypt, on the north by Palestine and part of the Roman province of Syria, and extending southward to the Elanitic Gulf—which seem, indeed, for the greater part of their history, to have been the boundaries within which they lived.

The second tribe of the Ishmaelites is KEDAR. It is described as a distant people (Jer. ii. 10), in the remote south, in opposition to the Moschi, one of the most northern nations. But they roamed to the Red Sea, the confines of Arabia Petræa, and, like the Nabatæans, in connection with whom they are mentioned both by Biblical and profane writers, they extended in the east and north partly to Arabia Felix, and partly to the territory of Chaldæa. For this reason, no doubt, Kedar was later used for the whole of Arabia; Ezekiel speaks of "Arabia and all the princes of Kedar" (xxvii.21); and the Rabbins call the Arabian language the "tongue of Kedar." The Kedarites are characterized as a nation inhabiting dark-coloured tents; famous for their cattle, and providing the market of Tyre with sheep and goats; as traversing the desert with their camels, and reputed for great wealth and prosperity; as a nation long unmolested by invaders, dwelling in security, "without gates and bars," in solitary tracts, safe by their undaunted valour and their far-famed skill in archery: but at last, attacked by the armies of Nebuchadnezzar, and suffering fearful devastation.

It is at present agreed, that DUMAH is represented by the fortified place still called "the rocky or Syrian Dumah" (in contradistinction to Dumah in Irak), between the Syrian Desert and Arabia Proper, in the province of Nedshed, about six days journey from Damascus, and about double that distance from Medinah.

The district of TEMA lay in the south of the Idumæans, and was the natural refuge of the latter in times of danger. It is sometimes coupled with Dedan, and sometimes with Sheba, and, like the latter, described as carrying on lively commerce through the caravans of the desert.

JETUR is undoubtedly the province in the east of the Jordan, later called Ituræa, and still traceable in the present Jedur, containing about twenty inhabited villages; for the two tribes and a half of the Hebrews there domiciled, were under the necessity of carrying on war against them. The Ituræans were indeed formidable, not only by their skilful use of the bow, but by their audacious rapacity, as robbers and waylayers lurking in wait

people. 18. And they dwelt from Havilah to Shur, which *is* in the east of Egypt, towards Assyria: *his lot* was cast in the presence of all his brethren.

19. And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's

for the pilgrim and the merchant, while they themselves generally eluded the pursuit of their enemies in their innumerable native caverns and ravines. But a great portion of them, defeated by king Aristobulus (B.C. 100), were compelled to submit to the rite of circumcision; and though temporarily regaining their independence, they suffered repeated discomfitures from the Roman legions, and were, under the emperor Claudius, incorporated in the province of Syria. Ituræa was bounded, in the west, by the heights of Mount Hermon; in the east, by the province of Auranitis; in the north, by the territory of Damascus; and in the south, by Gaulonitis and Bashan. But, like the names of many of the more powerful tribes, Ituræa was, by later writers, used to designate other and much wider districts, not only including Gaulonitis and Auranitis, but comprising the whole region in the north-east of Palestine; whence it is sometimes designated as lying in Cœlesyria, or on the Lebanon, or as adjoining the tracts of Arabia Deserta. It is, of course, impossible to decide whether the province Ituræa was, during the whole period to which we have alluded, inhabited by the original descendants of Jetur, who gave the name to the district, or whether it was, in the course of time, occupied by different tribes, while the Ituræans, expelled or emigrating, sought new abodes in other regions equally congenial to their tastes and pursuits.

It is generally known, that the Arabs are, according to their mode of life, divided into two chief classes: those of towns or villages, and those of the deserts, or the "dwellers in the tents"; the latter, of course, nomadic in their habits, are the Bedouins and *Scenitæ*. It is not improbable, that these two different classes are alluded to in the words: "by their villages and by their tents" (ver. 16). The roaming Bedouins regard the agricultural population with a certain contempt as slaves of toil and drudgery; they seldom cultivate the land which they may have inherited, or won by their valour; but rent it out for a fixed annual sum to peasants subordinated to them in a kind of vassalage. Their tents, of goats' or camels' hair, or coarse woollen stuff, and seldom or never of linen, of a brown or black colour, supported by poles from three to nine in number, and fastened to the ground by ropes and pegs, are sometimes circular, but more frequently of an oblong shape, about 6 to 10 feet high in the middle, 20 to 30 long, and 10 broad. The interior is, by curtains, divided into two parts, the inner one of which is allotted to the women, though wealthy persons provide separate tents for their wives (xxiv. 67); and not unfrequently a third division is added for the reception of the young and tender cattle, or, in greater households, for the servants. If the Bedouins encamp, they arrange their tents in an irregular circle, within which the cattle are kept during the night, and in the centre of which stand the tents of the emir or sheikh.—Each tribe is presided over by a chief or prince. The dignity, though in most cases hereditary in certain families, is elective with regard to individuals. It does not confer very great or distinguished privileges, and the only means by which the emir can maintain his authority, are superior valour, generosity, and justice. If he shows himself deficient in these virtues, he is abandoned, and replaced by a successor.

19, 20. The history of the first founder of the Hebrew nation has been brought to a close; though his life reaches considerably beyond the events immediately succeeding, his demise has been recorded; he left the scene, in order to allow his son, the heir of the Divine promises, greater

son: Abraham begat Isaac: 20. And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramæan, of Padan-Aram, the sister of Laban the Aramæan.—21. And Isaac entreated the Lord for his

prominence, and a fuller scope: with Isaac, therefore, the narrative assumes another phase, rises to a new and higher interest; and in order to indicate this epoch in the history of patriarchal development, the text commences with the characteristic heading: "These are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son." As genealogies were the primitive form of historical tradition, it is natural that the word signifying genealogy or generation, should have assumed the meaning of history; the former was originally the substance, and remained always the groundwork, of the latter (see p. 162). Less educated minds will always be more interested by persons than by events; all beginnings of history are epical, till imperceptibly, by a greater culture of mental powers, the abstract facts themselves are viewed as active agencies, endowed with life and individuality, and acknowledged to represent the working of the Universal Mind.—The commencement of a perfectly new section is, further, marked by the comprehensiveness with which some anterior facts are repeated: that Isaac took to wife Rebekah; that the latter was the daughter of Bethuel; that she was born in "the plain of Aramæa"; and that she was Laban's sister. These reiterations, natural in themselves, and far from causing difficulty, are in harmony not only with the style of the Bible, but of ancient historiography in general; they are, in this instance, not without a positive gain; for they add the valuable chronological fact, that Isaac was forty years old when he married Rebekah; a statement of decided importance for the exact understanding of several circumstances connected with Isaac's history.

21—26. For his matrimony remained long without an offspring; during nearly twenty years, he had in vain hoped for the realisation of his wishes (ver. 26); he saw in his own life a repetition of the trials to which his father had been submitted; and he was required, like him, to display unwavering faith and confidence that he would increase into a mighty nation. After the lapse of that protracted period only he addressed a fervent prayer to God: then only he urged his own wish against the will of God; he had not ceased to believe; his supplication was the natural impulse of an afflicted heart; and as he expected his progeny from God alone, he thereby acknowledged the great fundamental truth, which had been embodied in the sacred covenant concluded with Abraham, and which implies so many virtues of a modest and pious mind. Significantly, therefore, our text adds after: "Isaac entreated the Lord," with the same phrase, "the Lord was prevailed upon by his entreaties"; the sons of Isaac were a gift of God; and they were, by the father, acknowledged as such. To make these two important and necessary facts the more strikingly obvious, the interval of twenty years and the prayer of Isaac were necessary.

The hostility of the Edomites and Hebrews dates from the very beginning of their national existence. When the Israelites, on their wanderings from Egypt to Canaan, had reached the territory of the Edomites, they asked in vain for permission to pass through their territory; though they promised to abstain from every act of violence, to pay for all the necessaries they might require, and to perform their journey on the ordinary public roads. Not only was their request haughtily rejected, but a strong army of the Edomites marched out to oppose them. Their enmity grew with the advancing generations; wars were almost continually carried on between both nations; the Edomites were alternately subjected and free: till, in the

wife, because she *was* barren: and the Lord was prevailed upon by his entreaties, and Rebekah his wife conceived. 22. And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If *it is* so, wherefore do I live? And she went to enquire of the Lord. 23. And the Lord said to her,

time of the destruction of the first temple, they displayed the most inveterate hatred and the most ungenerous jealousy. And yet the near ethnological affinity of both nations could not be denied; it was acknowledged by the Hebrew people, and was ratified by the Hebrew lawgiver; the former addressed the Edomites always in the most brotherly terms; and the latter facilitated their admission into the sacred community of Israel by express injunctions. The unnatural animosity between two tribes so nearly akin is represented in the history of the birth of their respective founders. Their enmity commences even before they are fully developed and capable of seeing the light of the day. Their blind antagonism threatens destruction to each other. The tormented mother, in the agony of her grief and pain, breaks forth in a passionate exclamation; with a vehemence characteristic to her nature, she utters an imprecation against her life, and against the conception for which so fervent prayers had been offered up. Seeing no human issue in this dangerous position, she again turns to God to learn His will and His design. But a prayer was this time not sufficient; she desired not merely a release from her pains, but she wished to know their end and meaning; she was convinced that the extraordinary symptoms felt by her prophetically pointed to important future events. By her long sojourn in Isaac's house, she was still more strengthened in her firm reliance in a universal rule of Providence; and she was, above all, certain of God's especial care for the seed of Abraham; she went, therefore, "to enquire of the Lord." The meaning of this phrase can scarcely be doubtful in this place. In most passages in which it occurs, it is clearly explained to imply an appeal to the prophet: "when a man went to enquire of God, he spoke thus, Come and let us go to the seer," for a Prophet was originally called a Seer. Now, Abraham had before been designated a prophet, and had formed the intermediate link between God and man; and nothing is, therefore, more natural, than that the Hebrew author intended to intimate that Rebekah enquired of God through Abraham, the prophet, her father-in-law, who still survived, and was, no doubt, awaiting with intense anxiety the birth of a grandson from Isaac.—The answer of God, communicated to Rebekah in a solemn form, and possessing all the beautiful characteristics of poetical prophecy, fully explained the remarkable state which caused her uneasiness and apprehension; for it informed her that she was about to give birth to the founders of two mighty nations, who, unequal in power, would be divided in rivalry and antagonism from their youth; and that the descendants of the older son would be subjected to those of the younger.—This prediction, fully satisfying Rebekah, sank deep into her heart; nor was it long before it began to realise itself. She became the mother of twins. The first son might have been repulsive to her by his external appearance, for he was "red, all over like a hairy garment." This strange circumstance was to her, no doubt, a foreboding of the animal violence of his character; it implied at once a proof that he would possess superior strength, but that he would deserve to obey rather than to govern; and he received, accordingly, the name Esau, the hairy man. The second son "took hold of Esau's heel, and his name was hence called Jacob." This is certainly the sense of the words, which we are not permitted to modify by an explanation

Two nations *are* in thy womb,
And two peoples will be separated from thy bowels;
And people shall be stronger than people,
And the elder shall serve the younger.

24. And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled,

designed to remove a supposed impropriety, or suggested by the physical difficulties which it involves. This is the less permitted as there exists a striking parallel in the case of Acrisius and Prœtus, who, according to Apollodorus, "contended against each other when still in the mother's womb." It is impossible, to the historical critic, to deny facts or to distort conceptions plainly expressed in the text; and we have, in this instance, the additional testimony of the prophet Hosea, who adverts to this tradition in nearly the same terms (xii. 4). But it is a perfectly different thing to question the truth of a legend, and to search after its origin; the latter task is as legitimate as it is important; and, in this case, it leads to a very satisfactory result. The name of the father of the twelve tribes was undoubtedly known to have been *Jacob*; but this appellation, if taken in its obvious etymological meaning, implies a deep ignominy; for the root from which it is derived signifies *to deceive, to defraud.* Jacob would, therefore, be nothing else but the crafty *impostor*; in this sense, Esau, in the heat of his animosity, in fact, clearly explains the word: "justly is his name called Jacob (cheat), because he has cheated me twice" (xxvii. 36); which exclamation, moreover, proves that the name Jacob was not given to him by Esau in his anger, nor was derived from his later cunning conduct in the house of Laban; but that it belonged to him from his birth. The etymology teaches that Jacob means, "he who is on the heel of somebody, or follows"; so that the name would simply signify, the *second* son. Thus understood, a clearer light is thrown on another passage, connected with the same appellation; the angel of God said to Jacob: "thy name shall no more be called *Jacob* (the second), but *Israel*, for thou hast obtained the mastery with God and man, and hast prevailed"; that is, thou art now the *first* or the highest in rank (xxxii. 29). But though this appears to have been the original meaning of Jacob, the name was later understood, on the one hand, more literally, as in our text, and in Hosea; and, on the other hand, more figuratively, as in the words of Esau (xxvii. 36); while the narrative of this chapter, no doubt, originated in the desire of graphically representing the fact concerning the early contentions between the two kindred nations; and whatever the modern reader may think of the form in which this fact has been embodied, he will at least not fail to perceive and to appreciate the manifold historical allusions which it implies. For, as we have observed, the conflict began even before the Israelites reached Palestine; from this time, the Edomites were regarded with suspicion; and when Saul undertook an expedition around the boundaries of the Holy Land, to check the doubtful nations, he included the land of Edom in his operations; but this seems to have excited rather than pacified the nation; for David, during six months, carried on a most sanguinary war against them with the whole army of Israel; and in order to keep them in submission, he was compelled to place garrisons in every part of the territory. But in Solomon's time already, Hadad, from the royal house of Edom, appears to have caused a revolution, or at least endangered the possession of the land; and the harbour which that king opened at Ezion-geber, near Elath, at the Red Sea, seems to have served at once a political and military purpose. After the division of the empire, Edom remained subject to Judah; though a stadtholder, even then bearing

then, behold, *there were* twins in her womb. 25. And the first came out red, all over like a hairy cloak, and they called his name Esau. 26. And after that his brother came out, and his hand took hold of Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob: and Isaac *was* sixty years old when he begat them.—27. And the boys grew: and Esau understood the chase, a man of the field; and Jacob *was* a

the name of king of Edom, was the chief of the country; he was the general in war; and was, no doubt, selected from the principal families of the Edomites. But the memory of their former independence lived among them; they waited for an opportunity to break their fetters; in the times of Joram (B.C. 890), they accomplished their design; they proclaimed their own king; the campaign which the king of Judah undertook against them, was unsuccessful; and they maintained their independence during a long period. They were, indeed, attacked and defeated by king Amaziah (B.C. 838); his successor Uzziah (B.C. 809) gained Elath; but this town was shortly afterwards taken from the Hebrews by the Syrians; the Edomites invaded Judæa, under Ahaz (B.C. 741); and enjoyed, no doubt, complete liberty; till, like most of their neighbours, they fell a prey to the marvellous progress of the Chaldean despots. The indelible enmity of the Idumæans against the Hebrews outlived, however, their own subjection, and the destruction of Jerusalem; it raged in unabated violence in the time of the Maccabees, and the period of the Roman invasion; even at that period, they are still described as a turbulent and rude nation, always meditating commotions, rejoicing in convulsions and changes, ever ready to seize arms, and hastening into battles as to feasts. These facts suffice to show the truth of the statement contained in our text, that "the one people was stronger than the other people; and that the elder served the younger"; but they prove also the correctness of the remark, later made with regard to Esau, that "when he had the power, he broke the yoke from his neck" (xxvii. 40): which, no doubt, refers to the permanent deliverance in the time of Joram.

27—34. The more Esau and Jacob advanced towards manhood, the more striking became the difference of their characters. The former liked a life of excitement, adventure, and danger, as a huntsman, in the wilds and on the mountains; the other inclined to a calm, retired existence, as a harmless shepherd, in nomadic tents. But the text, obviously in opposition to the character of Esau, adds, that Jacob was an "upright man." Though it is thereby not intimated that the bold feats of the chase are in themselves objectionable or immoral; yet the pensive tranquillity favoured by a pastoral life was, in every respect, more congenial to the Hebrew character; it was to this side that its sympathies verged; such pursuits were deemed more favourable for the development of the inner man; and hence, if Jacob embraced them with deliberate choice, they were to the Hebrew historian a certain guarantee of a serious and well-directed mind (see p. 175). However, Isaac was very strongly attached to Esau; he loved him as his firstborn son, on whom the blessing of Abraham would naturally descend, and through whom the great future would be realised. He could scarcely imagine that the preference was intended for the younger brother. Although he himself was a second son, he was the only one born by Abraham's lawful wife; no such difference existed in the case of Esau and Jacob; and as the former seemed to be an obedient and dutiful son, there was the less cause to suspect that he was to be deprived of his due rights. But Rebekah entertained a predilection for the younger

righteous man, dwelling in tents. 28. And Isaac loved Esau, because he ate of *his* venison: and Rebekah loved Jacob. 29. And Jacob cooked lentiles: and Esau came from the field, and he *was* tired: 30. And Esau said to Jacob, Let me devour, I pray thee, of that red, red *pottage:* for I *am* tired: therefore his name was called Edom [the Red]. 31. And Jacob said, Sell me to-day thy

son, whose gentler disposition gained her sympathy, and to whom the prophecy, more faithfully remembered by her, had assigned the superior dignity. But then an incident happened, almost indifferent in itself, but eminently calculated to disclose the nature and character of the two brothers. It is significant by its very insignificance. Jacob had cooked a dish of lentiles, when Esau, just returned from the field, hungry and exhausted, asked for some of the pottage. Jacob, desirous to profit by Esau's greediness, requested him to cede to himself the birthright, as the eldest son. Esau, careless and unreflecting, intent merely upon the gratification of the momentary appetite, ennobled by no lofty prospects into the future, living only for himself, and seeking no glory or immortal fame; not perceiving the holy thread which connects time and eternity; feeling himself a fragment, a mystery, a perishable object; Esau exclaimed: "Behold, I shall soon die, and what profit is this birthright to me?" Jacob, wishing to secure for ever the advantage which might later be reclaimed by his brother, urged him to confirm the cession by an oath. Esau consented; and by the solemn ratification acknowledged, that it was not merely in an unguarded moment of weakness that he gave up his birthright; but because — he despised it. Every part of the transaction is important. The picture, though of small compass, is executed with precision, and with touches distinctly and strongly marked. It is clear beyond a doubt, that Esau's character is designedly described not only with disdain and reproof, but even with a certain irony and ridicule; it is, indeed, a humorous and jovial trait, to compare his hairy body to a "fur-cloak"; he returns from the chase breathless, sees a dish of lentiles, and in his voracity demands "to devour of that red, red thing"; the predominance of his animal nature is pourtrayed with a conscious emphasis; insensible to all higher aspirations, he deems it scarcely worth his while to think about the birthright; and when he has satisfied his wild appetite, he is, in conclusion, introduced with an obvious accumulation of verbs certain to produce a jocular effect: "and so he ate, and drank, and rose, and went away, and despised the birthright." It would be idle to contend, that all this merely describes the simplicity, straightforwardness, or *naïveté* of Esau's mind; qualities as amiable and heartwinning, as Esau's grossness and rusticity are odious and repulsive. These latter traits, clearly intended in the text, fully agree with the national character of the Edomites: a people mostly living in rocky, mountainous tracts; obtaining a scanty subsistence from the gain of their bow; at every moment exposed to risk their lives for nothing more than a meal to satisfy their hunger; during long periods insociable and uncivilized; dreaded but not respected; betraying in their very appearance the savage recklessness of their character; wild, indomitable, and dangerous like the Bedouins, without their generous qualities; despising the ties of relationship, and disregarding the bonds of nature; such a people could not, as regards their origin, be described with more masterly skill than is done in our text.

But, on the other hand, Jacob's character is represented with no less propriety and accuracy. We cannot but acknowledge, that the insidious cunning with which he acquired the birthright, is a fea-

birthright. 32. And Esau said, Behold, I *am* going to die: and what profit is the birthright to me? 33. And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he swore to him: and he sold his birthright to Jacob. 34. And Jacob gave to Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he ate, and drank, and rose, and went away: thus Esau despised the birthright.

ture which the Hebrew writer intended to condemn and to denounce; it was the consciousness of guilt and injustice which induced Jacob to require an oath from Esau; and a remembrance of this fraudulent act urged the latter, when in a more sober disposition, to explain his name as meaning deceiver and defrauder (xxvii. 36). This latter circumstance removes every doubt; the manner in which Jacob here acted, was branded by the author as immoral and despicable. But though the means were base, the feeling which actuated him, was as praiseworthy and pious, as his aim was pure and sublime. There lived in Jacob a longing to become the propagator of that truth, which Isaac had received from his father; and to spread those blessings which were promised through him to all the nations in the fulness of time. This desire was either engendered or enhanced by the oracle which his mother had received before his birth. So far, he was the worthy descendant of Abraham. But his mind lacked the grand resignation of the latter; he possessed not that abundance of faith which teaches to wait and to be resigned; he intended to work by human prudence into the hands of Providence, forgetting, that, though born the second son, he might, by the mercy of God, be *elected* to be the first. His thoughts were still impetuous and worldly; and a long and severe school of sorrows was required to educate and to purify him.

Lentiles were and are extensively and carefully grown in Egypt, Palestine, and Syria; those of Egypt were, at a later period, particularly famous; and the manner of cooking them is even immortalised on monuments. They are not only used as a pottage, but in times of scarcity, and more generally by the poor, they are baked into bread, either alone or mixed with barley. Lentiles and rice, boiled in equal quantities, form still one of the favourite dishes in many parts of the East. When cooked, they are of a yellowish brown colour, approaching to red; some species, growing on a red soil, have this colour naturally: and hence Esau, in his haste, calls the dish simply *the red one.* The fact, that lentiles were among the cheapest and most common articles of vegetable food, enhances the force and point of our narrative. The privileges which the birthright legally confers; the double portion of the father's property; the higher authority in the family; the greater social influence; all these advantages, in this instance enhanced by spiritual blessings as their most precious accompaniment, could have no value for one who regarded his existence merely as the transitory play of an hour; and who was indifferent to the esteem of others, because he had not risen to understand the dignity of mankind. If we were to expect a historical allusion in this fact also, the probable supposition offers itself, that indeed the Edomites, who were masters of the wide tracts from the Red Sea along the whole mountain of Seir, up to the very frontiers of Palestine, might, with a little exertion, have extended their dominion over the land of Canaan; that, with a limited degree of ambition and self-control, they might have become a respected and mighty nation; but that their thoughtless and ferocious habits kept them in the dreary solitudes, far from the chief scenes of history and civilisation.—It is known, that the Mohammedans long kept the memory of this transaction alive by distributing daily to poor people and to strangers lentiles prepared in a kitchen near the grave at Hebron, where they believed the cession of the birthright took place.

CHAPTER XXVI.

SUMMARY.—A famine induced Isaac to journey to Gerar, with the view to proceed to Egypt; but on the command of God, who repeated to him all the blessings before granted to Abraham, he stayed in the Philistine town. Here he repeated the device with regard to Rebekah, which his father had twice practised with regard to Sarah, and which this time also was attended with a result equally favourable. He cultivated the soil, and obtained most plentiful harvests. Jealousy prompted the Philistines to stop the wells dug by Abraham; but Isaac re-opened them, and dug new ones, till he at last triumphed over the animosity of his enemies, and even the king, Abimelech, in due form renewed the political treaty before concluded with Abraham.—Esau, forty years old, took two wives from the Hittites, to the deep distress of his parents.

1. And there was a famine in the land, beside the first famine which was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Abimelech, the king of the Philistines, to Gerar. 2. And the Lord appeared to him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land of which I shall tell thee: 3. Sojourn in this land, and I shall be with thee, and I shall bless thee; for to thee, and to thy seed, I shall give all these countries; and I shall perform the oath which I swore to Abraham thy father; 4. And I shall multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and shall give to thy seed

1—6. The few incidents related of Isaac's life, are mostly repetitions from that of Abraham. This circumstance, far from being attributable to accident or neglect, is based on the plan and economy of the composition. The history of the Bible is spiritual, representing the rule of the Deity, and embodying either a religious idea or a moral lesson. Now, as Isaac was, in the widest sense, the heir of Abraham, the child of Divine grace, blessed because Abraham was obedient to the Divine commands (ver. 5), the recipient and guardian of treasures acquired before; his history is but the reflex of that of his father; it is like the echo of some sublime and solemn harmony. — A famine compelled Isaac, as it had compelled his father, to wander from the place of his abode (ver. 1; xx. 10); he left Beer-Lahai-Roi (xxv. 11), to proceed, like Abraham, to Egypt (ver. 2). But the time for the immigration of Abraham's seed into the land of the Pharaohs had not yet arrived (xv. 13). On the other hand, the territory of the Philistines, though not properly forming a part of the promised land, was exempted from the curse of extirpation; Abraham had sworn to the king to be ever faithful and friendly to his progeny (xxi. 22—24); and the monarchs of Philistia seemed indeed to deserve this regard by their probity and faith. — Isaac went, therefore, to Gerar (see p. 187). The king of the Philistines, in Abraham's time, was Abimelech, and the general of his army was Phichol (xxi. 22): the same names are mentioned in our chapter (vers. 1, 26). But the two events are separated by a period of sixty to seventy years; for Isaac was then about ten years old, while, at the time of the famine, he was about eighty years (xxv. 26; xxvi. 34). Whether Abimelech and Phichol are not proper nouns, but the common appellative titles for the Philistine kings and chiefs, or whether the same individuals were supposed to have still lived after the lapse of so great an interval, must remain undecided; but it is apparent, that the introduction of the same names is also in-

all these countries; and in thy seed all the nations of the earth will be blessed; 5. Because Abraham obeyed My voice, and observed My observances, My commandments, My statutes, and My doctrines. 6. And Isaac dwelt in Gerar. — 7. And the men of the place asked *him* concerning his wife; and he said, She *is* my sister: for he feared to say, *She is* my wife; lest, *said he*, the men of the place kill me on account of Rebekah; because she *was* beautiful of appearance. 8. And it happened when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech, the king of the Philistines, looked out of the window, and saw, and, behold, Isaac *was* sporting with Rebekah his wife. 9. And Abimelech called Isaac, and said, Behold, indeed she *is* thy wife: and how didst thou say, She *is* my sister? And Isaac said to him,

tended to express the parallel course of the history of the father and the son.—Nor will it, from this point of view, appear in any way surprising, that the blessings of Isaac are almost literally identical with those before given to Abraham; they consist of the three great promises of a numerous progeny, their conquest of Canaan, and their blissful influence on the salvation of mankind; but God speaks of their realisation as of a duty which He is bound to fulfil; for Abraham had acted according to the conditions of the covenant; he had listened to the voice of God; and had "kept His observances, His commandments, His statutes, and His doctrines." The words here used with regard to the patriarch's obedience, almost exhausting the various classes of ordinances, are indeed those later employed when the whole legislation was completed: but here, no doubt, that Law is referred to which is written on the heart of man, and which, though manifold and complicated, is obvious to the well-trained intellect; or, if even not understood, is practised in unconscious virtue. And, since Abraham is the type of the pious Israelite, the terms here introduced do not obscurely intimate, that the Law is only the embodiment and clearer expression of the sentiments innate in every uncorrupted mind.

7—11. The accident, which occurred twice in the life of Abraham, happened in the less eventful history of Isaac also (xii. 10—20; xx.). Wrongly suspecting the Philistines, among whom he stayed, of criminal lasciviousness, he pretended that Rebekah was his sister. But when the king discovered Isaac's true relation to her, he felt anguish and terror; he saw how easily an atrocious sin might have been committed by any one of his people; and he gave the most rigorous commands that his guests should be kept sacred and inviolable. Here, again, the Philistine surpasses the Hebrew in moral excellence. The former profoundly abhors a crime of which the latter thinks him or his subjects capable. The patriarch believes that there is no reverence of God among the people (xx. 11); and these doubtful suspicions, together with fear of life (ver. 9), appear to him sufficient to justify an untruth and a heedless risk of his domestic purity. But this time no direct interference of God solved the difficulty and removed the danger; the tender familiarity in which Isaac was seen to indulge with Rebekah showed, in a natural manner, their conjugal connection; Divine plagues, though apprehended by the king, did not really happen; the whole episode is carried out by purely human agencies;—this may

Because I said, Lest I die on her account. 10. And Abimelech said, What *is* this thou hast done to us? one of the people might easily have lain with thy wife and thou wouldst have brought guilt upon us. 11. And Abimelech charged all the people, saying, He who toucheth this man or his wife shall surely be put to death.— 12. And Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year a hundredfold: and the Lord blessed him. 13. And the man became great, and he went on growing great, until he became very great. 14. And he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and a great number of servants: and the Philistines envied him. 15. And all the wells which his father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had

be regarded as an indication that the third repetition of the same weakness is still less approved of or excused; but that it is introduced partly because it was a historical tradition, and partly as an analogy to Abraham's history. Though the faith of the patriarchs was, in some moments, capable of the highest flight; it was not equally lofty on all occasions; and failed entirely on some. But the Philistines, by this incident, gained a new claim to a longer political existence, since, in the ethics of the Scriptures, degeneracy of morals alone causes the destruction of communities, while virtue is the pledge of life and stability.

12—17. When Eastern nomads happen to arrive at a locality promising food for their cattle during a longer period, they often, at the same time, apply themselves to agriculture, ready to resume their wanderings after the completion of the harvest. When, therefore, Isaac saw himself safe in the fertile districts of Gerar, which had remained untouched by the famine prevailing around; he, likewise, began to cultivate the ground. This fact evidently marks a progress in the history of the patriarchs; it is the transition from uncertain migrations to a more settled mode of life; it implies a more permanent interest in the land itself; during one season, at least, the Hebrew could call his own, not only the grave of his parents, but the soil which gives life and wealth; he ate his own bread, and owed it to the beneficence of God alone, who blessed his labours with a hundred-fold produce. But Isaac was not intended to carry the development of Israel a decided step onward; he might, as a forerunner, point to future phases of progress; but he should not accomplish them himself; he merely possessed what he had received from his father; hence, on the one hand, his rich harvests, were not obtained in the promised land itself, but in the territory of the Philistines, who had just given another guarantee that they would survive the destruction of the tribes of the Canaanites; and, on the other hand, even the enjoyment in the strange land was not permitted to last long; for Isaac was, by envy or fear, compelled to leave the scene of his prosperity, and to continue his wandering life. The jealousy of the Philistines manifested itself in deeds of mischief. So far from looking with satisfaction on the agricultural prosperity of Isaac, they placed in his way every obstacle fatal to a proprietor of cattle, depriving him of the indispensable wells which his father had dug. Their animosity assumed so serious a character,

stopped them, and filled them with earth. 16. And Abimelech said to Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we. 17. And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tents in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there. —18. And Isaac dug again the wells of water, which they had dug in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names like the names by which his father had called them. 19. And Isaac's servants dug in the valley, and found there a well of fresh water. 20. And the herdsmen of Gerar quarrelled with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, The water *is* ours: and he called the name of the well Esek [Contention], because they contended with him. 21. And they dug another well, and strove for that also: and he called the name Sitnah [Strife]. 22. And he removed from there, and dug another well; and about that they did not quarrel: and he called its name Rehoboth [Enlargement]; and he said, For now the Lord hath enlarged for us, and we shall be

that the king, no doubt, in order to prevent more violent disturbances, found it prudent to request Isaac to leave his land, reminding him, that he had grown much more powerful than his subjects themselves (ver. 16); for "he had become greater and greater till he was very great" (ver. 13); and he especially possessed, besides the cattle, a vast number of slaves (ver. 14).

18—22. He left the town, and pitched his tents in the valley of Gerar. But here he found malice and ill-feeling not less active; the wells secured by Abraham were likewise stopped; but, re-opening them, he called them by their former names, in order to show how faithfully he followed in his father's steps. He dug, besides, several new wells, two of which being disputed with him by the shepherds of Gerar, he appropriately denominated Strife and Contention. Though Isaac would, no doubt, have been strong enough to defend his rights, his peaceful disposition induced him calmly to yield to violence; and his enemies, at last conquered by his magnanimity, allowed him the undisturbed possession of the third well which he discovered, and which he therefore called Enlargement, saying, "Now the Lord hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land" (ver. 22). A new triumph was gained, not by strength of arms but of character, not by the exertion of men but by the will of God: and this victory of the mind was regarded as a promise of other great achievements.

23—25. Therefore, God appeared to Isaac anew, and confirmed to him the former assurances; He bade him be firm and fearless; for He would shield him and multiply his progeny, on account of His servant Abraham; for He is "the God of Abraham." This vision took place in Beer-sheba, whilst Isaac was still wandering, no doubt, near the tamarisk which his father had planted, and at which he had offered up his prayers to the everlasting God (xxi. 33). Here Isaac erected an

fruitful in the land.—23. And he went up from there to Beer-sheba. 24. And the Lord appeared to him that night, and said, I *am* the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I *am* with thee, and I shall bless thee, and shall multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake. 25. And he built an altar there, and invoked the name of the Lord, and pitched his tent there: and Isaac's servants dug there a well.—26. And Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath his councillor, and Phichol the general of his army. 27. And Isaac said to them, Wherefore do you come to me, and you hate me, and have sent me away from you? 28. And they said, We saw indeed that the Lord was with thee: and we said, Let there now be an adjuration between us, between us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee; 29. That thou wilt do us no evil, as we have not touched thee, and as we have done to thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace: thou *art* now the blessed of the Lord. 30. And he made them a feast, and they ate and drank. 31. And

altar, and also worshipped God, his protector; and since this place was now doubly sacred, he pitched there his tents, and dug a well.

26—33. This well was destined to obtain a peculiar importance. The king of the Philistines had always treated Isaac with regard and veneration; he respected in him the son of that "prophet," whose extraordinary dignity had before been so strikingly manifested (xx. 6); and when he said to him: "thou art much mightier than we," he certainly did not understand this expression literally; it was dictated by politeness, not by fear; for, if indeed the king of Gerar was the less powerful of the two, his boast, that he had dismissed the patriatch in peace, would have caused in the latter a smile of contempt, rather than the feeling of gratitude. But though separated from Isaac, he still saw him in his mind protected by a supernatural power, and blessed by a Divine influence; he was impressed with the conviction, that a great future awaited him and his race; and he was, therefore, anxious to renew the alliance which had been concluded with Abraham. It is, hence, but natural, that the succeeding part of our narrative should, in almost every particular, be parallel with the corresponding event in Abraham's life (xxi. 22—32). The transaction is here also designed to possess a public and political character. Hence, the king journeyed to Isaac, accompanied by his general Phichol, and his councillor or minister Ahuzzath. Isaac, acknowledging Abimelech's superiority in material power, charged him, somewhat bitterly, with having forced him to leave abodes where he had begun to grow rich and prosperous; he ascribed that measure, with a unjust exaggeration, to the hatred of the king also; but the latter deemed it inexpedient to revert to past contentions; he felt himself innocent; he had the welfare of his people at heart; and he replied with a slight evasion, that his ardent desire was a close and indissoluble friendship with the Hebrews. He saw without envy, but not without ap-

they rose early in the morning, and swore one to another: and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace. 32. And it was on the same day, that Isaac's servants came, and told him concerning the well which they had dug, and they said to him, We have found water. 33. And he called it Shibah; therefore the name of the city *is* Beer-sheba to this day.—34. And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon

prehension, the manifest increase of Isaac's resources; he apprehended, that this growing strength might one day be employed to the injury, whether the subjection or the destruction, of the Philistines; he wished to bind him by that terrible oath which calls down the most awful imprecations upon him who breaks it. The patriarch, compelled to do justice to the virtue of Abimelech, renewed the compact guaranteeing the future independence of the Philistines, and exempting them from the fate impending on the Canaanites. The duties of hospitality were liberally performed; convivial enjoyment revived and cemented their friendship; and oaths were exchanged.—The king had scarcely departed, fully satisfied with the result of his journey, when the servants of Isaac informed him of the new well which they had found. The patriarch, whose mind was still absorbed by the solemnities just performed, designated the well with a name calculated to commemorate the event; he called it *Oath*, which word coincides in Hebrew with *seven*, the number of sacredness and religious obligation (comp. xxi. 30, 31); and, hence, the town in which the occurrence took place, bore the name of *Beer-Sheba*, or "Well of the Oath." It is true, that the same name was given to that place before, in Abraham's time, on a similar occasion (xxi. 31). But our passage does not state, that the town *now received* the name of Beer-Sheba; it simply mentions, that "the name of the town was Beer-Sheba"; and it intimates, that this name, which might have existed before, now obtained an additional propriety from the new well dug by Isaac's servants, and from the oath sworn by Abimelech. On the former occasion, Beer-Sheba was not even called a town; and it appears, that the place of the well only was, at that time, designated "Well of the Oath"; but that, gradually, the *town* in which or near which it lay, was called Beer-Sheba (xxii. 19); and that here another reason is assigned for this appellation. But it is certain, that the well is, in our text, represented as different from that opened by Abraham in the same locality; for it is clearly distinguished from those stopped by the heathen tribes, and then re-opened by Isaac (ver. 18); and it may be a welcome illustration of the Biblical narrative, that modern travellers have discovered *two* wells in the neighbourhood of the ancient Beer-sheba, both bearing this name. But we must not forget, that the chief tendency of this section also is to show the strict analogy between the history of Isaac and that of Abraham; that, therefore, both narratives may, as regards their origin, be traceable to one and the same tradition; and that the early existence of two wells with the same or similar names easily suggested two separate narratives.

34, 35. Esau, entering matrimonial life, like his father, in his fortieth year (xxv. 20), deviated in two most important points from the customs which had become traditional in his family. First, violating the law of monogamy, he took *two* wives. But since polygamy, as a matter of practice, remained so deeply rooted among the Hebrews throughout the Biblical times, that it was not always avoided even by

the Hittite. 35. And they were a grief of mind to Isaac and to Rebekah.

grave and pious men, however forcibly it was condemned in doctrine and example; the text adds no word of reproach with regard to this part of Esau's conduct; but it is very strong and severe in respect to another point: these two wives were Hittites, belonging to the detested tribes plunged in crime and impiety, and hastening their unavoidable perdition; they infected the purity of Abraham's family, which was destined as the seed of righteousness and salvation; and hence they were a source of heartburning grief to Isaac and to Rebekah. Esau had shown utter indifference to the honour and dignity of his descendants; he had proved, that he had no feeling beyond the transitory hour; he could, therefore, in choosing his wives, have no other consideration but his interests and his propensities.

CHAPTER XXVII.

SUMMARY.—Isaac, feeling the approach of decrepitude, intended to bestow his blessing upon Esau; but Rebekah, wishing to secure it for her younger son, suggested a stratagem which, executed by Jacob, was attended with the desired result. The consequence was, that Esau, who could now obtain a prediction of but very questionable value, conceived a violent hatred against his brother, who to avoid his anger, on the advice of Rebekah, departed to Mesopotamia, while Isaac was persuaded that the end of his journey was the choice of a wife from her family in Haran.

1. And when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called Esau his eldest son, and said to him, My son: and he said to him, Behold, *here am* I. 2. And he said, Behold, I pray thee, I am old, I

1—4. It was the aim of the Bible to substitute the supernatural for the natural; to direct the attention from the changeful phenomena to the immutable laws which govern them; to proclaim the Mind which called forth, formed, and rules the Matter; to diffuse that happiness which lies beyond the senses, in the depth of the purified heart and in the enlightened intellect; to teach Love which gives, instead of Selfishness which desires; and to represent Time only as the threshold of Eternity. But in no part of the Scriptures are these contrasts more strikingly exhibited than in the history of the patriarchs. Here both principles, the natural and the spiritual, are systematically personified, in Abraham and Lot, in Isaac and Ishmael, and in Jacob and Esau—while with Jacob, the father of the twelve sons, each of whom was destined to form a member of the community of God, the dualism ceases. But that contrast is not without a marked development. In Abraham and Lot, it is only in its beginning; both emigrate into the promised land; both thrive on the chosen soil; both are specially protected; and Lot is twice saved, once from captivity, and once from death. In Isaac and Ishmael, the distinction grows wider; the latter is expelled from his father's house; he takes his abodes in the inhospitable desert; associates and intermarries with the Egyptians; and lives on prey and rapine; but he shares the sign of the covenant (xvii. 25), a sacred link connecting him with his race, a ray of hope left for the future. But in Esau and Jacob, the antagonism between the man of nature and the man of spiritual training reaches its highest gradation. They are from the beginning distinguished as "the man of the field," and "the upright man" (xxv. 27); the one lives only for the present, the other seeks

know not the day of my death: 3. Now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and hunt for me *some* venison; 4. And make me a palatable meal, such as I love, and bring *it* to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die. — 5. And Rebekah listened when Isaac spoke to Esau his son. And Esau went to the field to hunt *for* venison, in order to bring *it*. 6. And Rebekah spoke to Jacob her son, saying, Behold, I heard thy father speak to Esau thy brother, saying, 7. Bring me venison, and make

his glory in the future; the one laughs at the imaginary worth of the birthright, the other covets it as his highest felicity; the one does not hesitate to form an alliance with the daughters of Canaan, the other allows the best part of his manhood to pass rather than follow that example. But notwithstanding all this, Isaac persevered in his preference of Esau; though grieved at his marriages, he intended to bestow upon him the blessing which made him the heir of the Divine promises, and which, pronounced immediately before death, was regarded as infallible. This conduct of Isaac, the more surprising if we consider the prophecy given to Rebekah, that the elder son was destined to serve the younger (xxv. 23), may be thus explained. Though Esau was, indeed, merely the man of nature, he was a perfect type of his class; he possessed all its heart-warming qualities; he was frank and unsophisticated; cordial and true; quick in his sentiments and in his resolutions; and though liable to ebullitions of passion and vindictiveness, yet easily soothed and generously forgiving. The character of Jacob, on the other hand, though ennobled by higher aspirations, from early youth directed to the loftiest spiritual aims, and earnestly craving to become the heir and successor of Abraham, was disfigured by many vices to which a subtle mind is peculiarly subject. His cunning, insincerity, and unmanly stratagems were abject and despicable. Isaac sympathised, therefore, more deeply with Esau; he turned to the man of nature, or, as the text expresses it, "he ate of his venison" (xxv. 28); he preferred the more *perfect* son: but he forgot that the perfection of Esau lay merely in the sphere of the natural, was circumscribed by narrow limits, and was, therefore, more easily attainable; while the realm of the ideal, after which Jacob strove, is so boundless that perfection, in that field, is impossible to man; but that one short flight into the region of truth and of moral beauty infinitely surpasses in value all attainments simply human and natural. Isaac did not preserve that sublimity which had fortified him for the sacrifice on Moriah; he relapsed to the level of ordinary men; he had become old, and his eyes were dim; and his mind had lost not a little in strength and elevation. It is a dexterous trait on the part of the author to express Isaac's predilection for the man of nature by his desire for venison, killed and prepared by him. Nothing could have better embodied the merely external or material relation between the father and his eldest son. The blessing is so prominently made dependent on this meal (ver. 4), that it appears almost as its reward. But, on the other hand, the venison is evidently like a sacrifice offered by the recipient of the blessing, and ratifying the proceedings; and hence Jacob killed and prepared *two* kids of the goats (ver. 9), whereas, for an ordinary meal, one would have been more than sufficient; it imparted to the ceremony, in certain respects, the character of a covenant; the one party showed

me a palatable meal, that I may eat, and I may bless thee before the Lord before my death. 8. And now, my son, listen to my voice, according to that which I command thee. 9. Go, I pray thee, to the flock, and fetch me from there two good kids of the goats; and I will make them a palatable meal for thy father, such as he loveth: 10. And thou shalt bring *it* to thy father, and he may eat, that he may bless thee before his death.—11. And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, Behold, Esau my brother *is* a hairy man, and I *am* a smooth man: 12. Perhaps my father

ready obedience and sincere affection, while the other accepted the gift, and granted, in return, the whole store of happiness he was able to bequeath. Thus the meal which Isaac required, has a double meaning, both connected with the internal organism of the book.

5—10. Though Isaac called Esau his eldest son (ver. 1), Rebekah, after the cession of the birthright, no longer regarded him as such. She had seen the prophecy received before the birth of the twins, approaching its realisation in more than one respect. The disposition and character of the sons were, to her, sure indications of the future; Esau appeared to her judgment as little capable of becoming the depository of the religion of Abraham, as she saw Jacob eager to fulfil this mission; and every doubt was removed when she perceived the heedlessness with which Esau despised the privileges of his birth. But she had been unable to gain Isaac over to her own conviction; she could neither understand nor eradicate his partiality for Esau; when she, therefore, heard, with alarm, of the intended blessing, too well aware of its unavoidable efficacy, and anxious to avert what she believed would be a fatality and a misfortune, she took refuge in a stratagem, proving her to be the worthy mother of the cunning Jacob. She was certainly in her aims more exalted than her husband; but she was far inferior to him in uprightness of conduct; she failed in morality and honesty; though her mind was elevated, her heart lacked the simplicity of innocence; she acted on the baneful principle that the end sanctifies the means; and she had so deeply imbibed this doctrine, that she preserved an imperturbable composure and firmness throughout the whole of the hazardous and complicated transaction. She knew well how to interest Jacob for her plans; she had heard Isaac say to Esau, that he wished to bless him before his death (ver. 4); in repeating this to Jacob, she represented his words to have been: "that I may bless thee *before the Lord* before my death" (ver. 7); the addition of the name of God at once enhances the sacred character of the narrative: it is as designedly omitted by the text in the address of Isaac to the worldly Esau, as it is deliberately inserted in the words of Rebekah to her ambitious son Jacob.

11—14. The latter was not indifferent to the appeal of his mother; he prized the blessing and wished to secure it; and he had no scruples with regard to the rights of Esau. He considered the transfer of the birthright for the pottage of lentiles as perfectly valid; but he was afraid of a possible failure; he trembled at the idea that the device might be discovered by Isaac, and that it would be punished with a deserved curse; he objected that his brother Esau was a "hairy man," while he himself was a "smooth man," by which circumstance alone he was certain that the father would detect the deception. Not truthfulness, but expediency prompted his hesitation; and when, therefore, his mother, with her characteristic calmness,

will feel me, and I shall be in his eyes as a deceiver; and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing. 13. And his mother said to him, Upon me *be* thy curse, my son; only obey my voice, and go fetch *them* for me. 14. And he went, and fetched, and brought *them* to his mother: and his mother made a palatable meal, such as his father loved.—15. And Rebekah took the choicest garments of her eldest son Esau, which *were* with her in the house, and dressed *with them* Jacob her younger son: 16. And she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon his smooth neck: 17. And she gave the palatable meal and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob. 18. And he came to his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here *am* I. Who *art* thou, my son? 19. And Jacob said to his father, I *am* Esau thy firstborn; I have done as thou badest me: rise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me. 20. And Isaac said to his son, How *is it*

had taken upon herself all possible consequences, thus showing her perfect confidence in the success of her scheme, he no longer delayed to execute her command, but prepared himself to deceive his blind father—an unfortunate step, which implicated him in a net of untruths; a sin for which he had to atone by years of trial and of toil.

15—26. The scene of the fraud is described with a psychological skill which rivets the interest, and excites the admiration, of the reader. Jacob, carefully disguised by his shrewd mother, dressed in the festive garments of Esau, and with the hairy skins of goats on his hands and his neck, stepped before his father, offered him the meal, and demanded the blessing. The old man who, from infirmity, was reposing on his bed, sat up to receive his son. When he asked Jacob who he was, the latter answered boldly: "I am Esau thy firstborn"; but he thought he recognised the voice of Jacob; his suspicions were roused; he knew the crafty disposition of his younger son too well; and he felt the duty of extreme carefulness. He expressed his doubt first most gently, by uttering his wonder how Esau had contrived to find the venison so speedily: upon which Jacob blasphemously replied, "The Lord thy God hath brought it in my way." It might be expected, that this solemn declaration would satisfy Isaac, and that he would, without delay, proceed to the intended ceremony. But his impressions of Jacob's deceitfulness were so strong, that that formal and sacred profession excited rather than removed his distrust. Wishing, therefore, to obtain another and more striking proof, he said, in undisguised terms, that he desired to feel him in order to convince himself whether he were Esau or not; such a doubt would not have offended Esau, because his mind was unconscious of guile; and if it offended Jacob, it was a very inadequate punishment for his open and deliberate untruth. But even when Isaac felt the hairy hands and neck, he could not banish his suspicions; he confessed that indeed the hands were those of Esau, yet the voice was that of Jacob. Conceiving, however, that he could not expect surer and more direct proofs,

that thou hast found so quickly, my son? And he said, Indeed, the Lord thy God brought *it* in my way. 21. And Isaac said to Jacob, Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou art indeed my son Esau or not. 22. And Jacob went near to Isaac his father; and he felt him, and said, The voice *is* Jacob's voice, but the hands *are* Esau's hands. 23. And he did not discern him, because his hands were hairy, as his brother Esau's hands: and he blessed him: 24. And he said, *Art* thou indeed my son Esau? And he said, I *am*. 25. And he said, Bring *it* near to me, and I will eat of my son's venison, that my soul may bless thee. And he brought *it* near to him, and he ate: and he brought him wine, and he drank. 26. And his father Isaac said to him, Come near now, and kiss me, my son. 27. And he came near, and kissed him: and he smelt the odour of his garments, and blessed him, and said,

he resolved to bless the son who stood before him (ver. 23). But when he was about to commence, he paused again; his scruples returned; and he asked anew calmly and affectionately: "Art thou my son Esau"?—to which Jacob was hardened enough to answer: "I am." It would have appeared an unworthy scepticism in Isaac to tarry any longer; he, therefore, without further objection, accepted the meal, like a grateful offering, regarding it as a gift of love which required a return on his part. When he, therefore, after the repast, wished to kiss his son, this was not dictated by a renewal of his doubts; it was an act of love in exchange for the affection just experienced; it sealed the alliance of the hearts of the father and the son; it expressed that both were links of the same spiritual chain; and is, in more than one respect, analogous to the imposition of the hand which later accompanied the blessing of Ephraim and Manasseh (xlviii. 14).

27—29. Many parts of Arabia and Palestine exhale a most delicious odour; after a refreshing rain especially, the air is perfumed with a fragrance inexpressibly sweet; and the soil, furrowed by the plough-share, emits often the balmy treasures hidden in its depth. Thus, the garments of Esau, the man of the field, who roamed through hill and valley, were redolent of the scent of aromatic herbs; they called up in Isaac's mind the pictures of freshness, health, and abundance; his spirit, moved and struck, assumed a prophetic elevation; and he began the blessing: "Behold, the odour of my son is as the odour of the field which the Lord hath blessed." He then describes the land intended for Jacob's inheritance most emphatically as one distinguished by fertility; the dew of heaven and the richness of the earth unite to mature the choicest productions; the bread which nourishes, and the wine which cheers the heart of man, are there brought forth in equal profusion; the necessities of life, easily and plentifully obtained, are enhanced by its comforts. This is the first benediction pronounced upon Jacob; and who can doubt, that it fully accords with the exceeding natural fertility of the Holy Land? Let us remind the reader of a few facts.

See, the odour of my son *is* like the odour of a field,
which the Lord hath blessed.
28. And God may give thee of the dew of heaven and of
the fatness of the earth,
And abundance of corn and wine.

Palestine is generally described in the Bible as "a good land, flowing with milk and honey;" and it fully deserves these epithets. It is distinguished by a salubrity of climate and exquisiteness of temperature scarcely to be expected from its geographical position; but the mountainous character of almost all its provinces obviates oppressive heat; the longest day in summer is only 14 hours and 12 minutes; occasional showers refresh the air; and the atmosphere is, therefore, generally pleasant and moderate. But the most remarkable feature in the climate of Palestine is the extraordinary difference between places often but a few miles distant from each other; the palm-tree and fruits of the tropics grow close by the nut-tree, the oak, and other products of the northern zones; hills and valleys alternate in rapid succession; the vegetable kingdom of almost all parts of the globe is represented in a country extending not more than about 190 miles in length, about 80 in breadth in the middle, and varying between 10 to 15 in other parts; and no month of the year is without fruits and blossoms.—The year is divided into two seasons:—

1. *The Winter.* It begins in the middle of October, when the days continue to be agreeably warm; while the nights commence to be cool; the *earlier rain* begins, though but gradually, and in isolated showers, still permitting the operations of agriculture. The trees lose their foliage, and fires are desirable as a matter of comfort. In December the rain becomes more and more copious and continuous, and it often comes down with such violence, as materially to injure or totally to destroy the frail houses, mostly constructed with mud-tiles baked in the sun, and with palm-branches; in January and February, it sometimes alternates with snow, or, in the night, with ice, which, however, generally melts on the same day; severe frost is rare, and in all cases of short duration; while mild and sunny days occasionally surprise the inhabitants, and invite them to the public places. But the influence of the colder season on man and beast is naturally greater in the East than in our countries; languor and diseases generally follow in its train; it is often most severely felt around Jerusalem, and aggravated by fearful tempests, not unfrequently accompanied with hail-storms. Travelling is, at that period of the year, both laborious and dangerous, especially in the steep mountain-paths. In January, the cold rain continues at intervals; but in the southern parts of Palestine the sky begins to assume a more serene aspect; occasional fine days are the harbingers of the more genial season; and in February, the mild temperature of spring prevails almost throughout the country. In the month of March to the middle of April falls the *latter rain*; the heat increases perceptibly, though the nights remain chilly. Thunder and lightning are not unfrequent during the first three months of the year, while from the middle of April to the middle of September, it neither rains nor thunders. Showers falling within this period cause consternation, as phenomena indicating some disorder in nature.

2. *The Summer.* Towards the end of April, the sky becomes more clear and transparent; heat and drought increase; but in the nights very abundant and refreshing dew descends, without which the vegetation of fields and meadows would inevitably wither. The dew is hence called the "precious treasure of heaven"; and invariably forms a chief feature in the picture of blissful fertility. This is generally the time for the corn-harvest. In May, the skies are perfectly cloudless,

29. Nations will serve thee, and peoples prostrate themselves before thee:
Be lord over thy brothers, and let thy mother's sons prostrate themselves before thee.

and the power of the solar rays increases; yet the evenings are delightfully cool. In June, July, and August, the heat steadily rises; a tropical temperature prevails; and deaths from sun-strokes occur; even the nights are sultry; and many fountains and cisterns dry up. The dew, though continuing to nourish the stronger plants, loses its effect upon the grass, herbs, and flowers; and the fields are so arid, that a single spark would instantaneously spread a conflagration; the richest soil is burnt; the beautiful verdure, which enchants the eye in April, is, three months later, converted into the brown blades of the desert. In September, the nights again become refreshing; and now and then, especially towards the end of the month, rain falls, and the heat diminishes.

A country whose seasons are so regular, and whose climate is, on the whole, so temperate, may well be expected to be distinguished by fertility. That it was so in an eminent degree, is fully confirmed both by Biblical and classical writers. It is, in the Old Testament, called "the choicest of all the countries of the earth" (Ezek. xx. 6); a "precious land, a beauteous inheritance among the hosts of nations" (Jer. iii. 19); a "land of brooks of water, of fountains, and deep floods; a land of wheat and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil-olive, and honey, whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass" (Deut. viii. 7—9); it is described as unlike the land of Egypt, "where the seed is sown and watered with the foot, like a garden of herbs" (see note on Exod. i. 19); as a country of hills and valleys, which drinks water of the rain of heaven; as a land which God loves, and "upon which the eyes of the Lord are constantly from the beginning of the year to the end of the year." Further, Tacitus observes: "the soil is fertile; it abounds in all sorts of fruits which our country produces, and besides them in balm and palm-trees." Josephus extols in glowing language the wealth and beauty of the valley of Jericho; Justinus writes in similar terms; and Ammianus praises the well-cultivated and highly productive fields; while the remark of Strabo, that the vicinity of Jerusalem is stony and parched, is opposed to all other and more authentic testimonies. Nor do all those accounts exaggerate the truth. The plains and valleys are irrigated by numerous rivulets; the mountains, gradually sloping down into hills, are peculiarly adapted for the cultivation of the vine and the olive-tree, and for the breeding of cattle; and though some are naturally arid and rocky, they were rendered highly useful by the industry of the ancient inhabitants; terraces dug from base to summit, and covered with richer soil, received the seeds; and in due season, the vernal and autumnal rains, the beneficent dew, the genial rays of the sun, and the mildness and salubrity of the atmosphere, matured olives, figs, and grapes, and soon also leguminous plants, and most excellent corn. —Though the desert in several parts encroaches upon the land, many districts of the interior vie with the most blooming tracts of Egypt and Mesopotamia. Palestine is, indeed, like an oasis in a surrounding wilderness; a favoured spot, which might well appear like the special gift granted by a beneficent God to a chosen nation. But the fruitfulness of Palestine was destroyed by warfare and pillage; perhaps no country on earth has been more frequently invaded and devastated; it was the scene of numberless wars and occupations; it passed successively into the hands of many neighbouring and distant nations, Asiatic, European, and African. Can we be astonished that districts, once blooming like

Cursed *be* those who curse thee, and blessed those who bless thee.—

30. And when Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and Jacob was yet scarcely gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, Esau his brother came in from his hunting. 31. And he also had made a palatable meal, and brought *it* to his father, and said to his father, Let my father rise, and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may bless me. 32. And Isaac his father said to him, Who *art*

beautiful gardens, lie neglected like a desert; that a population once flourishing and numerous, has, in many parts, shrunk into communities of paupers or robbers; and that, with the perpetual dread of the rapacious Bedouin over the head of the husbandman, the soil seems waste and desolate? However, neither violence nor negligence have been able totally to annihilate the natural fertility of Palestine; some of the terraces, especially between Nablous (Shechem) and Jerusalem, have remained, and are successfully cultivated by the Arabs who inhabit the neighbouring tracts; a considerable quantity of corn is annually exported from Palestine to Constantinople; and a still greater amount of raisin-honey is sold to Egypt; the cotton produced in the plains of Esdraelon, excels in quality even that of Syria; numberless herds and flocks graze on the luxurious fields of Galilee, and in the rich plains which border the northern part of the Jordan; swarms of wild bees accumulate their honey in the cavities of trees and the fissures of rocks; and the exertions lately commenced from various quarters for redeeming the Holy Land from the curse of indolence under which it has so long suffered, justify the hope of the most cheering success, promising to realize once more the prophetic blessing of Isaac: "The Lord may give thee of the dew of heaven, and of the fatness of the earth, and abundance of corn and wine."

He further promised to Jacob the dominion over subjugated nations; he alluded to the conquest of the surrounding provinces, and the extirpation of the tribes of Canaan; of all those who, by their crimes, were destined either to serve or to perish, and who, by descent and faith, were strangers to the Israelites. However, not those alone, but even his own "brothers," "the sons of his mother," should acknowledge the sovereignty of Jacob's progeny; and more particularly the Edomites, the nearest and latest kinsmen of the Hebrews, the children of an ancestor who was born of the same father and of the same mother with Jacob, and to whom, by right of nature, the authority of the firstborn belonged (ver. 37). But the Hebrews were destined to be more than the mere conquerors and inhabitants of Palestine; their worldly prosperity was but the pledge of higher and more precious treasures; it was the guarantee that they should be the guardians of truth and peace of mind; that all the nations of the earth were to follow the standard they would unfurl, and that all generations were to respect them as their guides and instructors: that "those who curse them are cursed, and those who bless them are blessed." The Israelites were selected as the prophets among the nations, to be the intermediate link between God and mankind. Thus understood, the prediction of Israel's dominion presents an admirable climax, from the foreign nations to kindred tribes, and from the external power to the universal sovereignty of the intellect.

30—33. A most intense, if not painful, interest is excited in the reader's mind; he is in an anxious suspense, trembling lest Esau should return and surprise Jacob in his ludicrous disguise and his reck-

thou? And he said, I *am* thy son, thy firstborn Esau. 33. And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who, then, *is* he who took venison, and brought *it* me? and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him:—he shall certainly be blessed.—34. When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceedingly bitter cry, and said to his father, Bless me also, Oh my father. 35. And he said, Thy brother came with cunning, and took away thy blessing. 36. And he said, Is he not

less fraud; his sympathy is divided, and in a perplexing conflict. The Biblical author was distinctly conscious of this critical situation; he relates, with great stress, that "Jacob was yet scarcely gone out from the presence of Isaac his father," when Esau came back. A scene of violence was thus avoided; and this was regarded as an interposition of Providence, as a sign that God desired the prerogatives of Jacob. When, therefore, Esau, hastening to prepare the venison, brought it to his father, and demanded the benediction, Isaac was indeed overwhelmed with consternation and grief; he felt, indeed, excruciating anguish that his younger son should have debased himself by falsehood, and craft, and shameless blasphemy (ver. 35); but he could not but acknowledge, in his success, the finger of God, who evidently had determined the elevation of Jacob; he could not but be forcibly reminded of the prophecy received by Rebekah, and now at last be convinced of its truth; and he exclaimed, though with a certain sorrowful feeling, yet with firmness and assurance: "he shall certainly be blessed." However deeply the father might continue to despise the abject means by which the benediction was obtained, he was now certain that Jacob was destined to be the propagator of the faith of Abraham.

34—38. In this embarrassing dilemma, both the nature of the patriarchal blessing and the character of Esau are most distinctly developed. The blessing is irrevocable; once pronounced, it works its effect with the infallibility of fate. This power is, indeed, attributed to the words of all parents spoken on their children; "the blessing of the father builds houses to the sons, the curse of the mother destroys them" (Sir. iii. 9); for the parents are to the children *the representatives of God:* but it is the case in an eminently higher degree with the patriarchs; they are, in their blessing, the instruments of God, who guides and inspires them; their words are Divine prophecies. These notions, undoubtedly standing in admirable harmony with the whole Biblical system, are certainly far superior to the analogous ideas of the classical nations. If Phœbus cannot revoke the fatal promise made to his ambitious son, Phæton; or if Theseus cannot arrest the curse which his blind wrath had hurled against his innocent son, Hippolytus: it is because the gods, themselves instruments, have no power over fate; nor is man the author of his own thoughts and words, but some demon is charged to infatuate, in order to ruin him.—Though Isaac exclaimed with a bitter pang: "Thy brother came with cunning," he was neither able nor desirous to annul the blessing; he seemed to have exhausted his whole store of prophetic benediction; he had scarcely a second to bestow: points more than sufficient to prove, that the blessing was not regarded as the voluntary act of the patriarch, but as the gift and emanation of God, which, like all that proceeds from Him, is perfect and unerring. But how did Esau act in this conflict? It appears, that even he, in the first impression of his mind, acknowledged the invisible hand of Providence; for when he heard, that his brother had obtained the blessing,

justly named Jacob [Deceiver]? for he hath now deceived me twice: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me? 37. And Isaac answered and said to Esau, Behold, I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants; and with corn and wine have I supported him: and what then shall I do to thee, my son? 38. And Esau said to his father, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me also, Oh my father. And Esau lifted up his voice, and

his feeling was that of intense and overpowering grief rather than of anger; "he cried with a great and exceedingly bitter cry"; and added simply: "Bless me also, Oh my father." But when Isaac himself could not repress his indignation against Jacob, when he described the means by which the latter had secured the privilege as contemptible cunning: how should the injured man of nature, impetuous and impulsive as he was, withhold an acrimonious and pungent rebuke? how should he not, in this maturer epoch of his life, be reminded of the artful insidiousness by which he had before been deprived of his birthright? and it is pardonable to his passion, that in order to give to the charge a greater stress, and a certain striking truth, he found Jacob's unprincipled cunning expressed and foreboded in his very name (see p. 323). But another interesting feature of Esau's character is here revealed. While in Jacob's conduct the high and noble aims which he pursued, were in most discordant contrast with the ungenerous means which he employed, Esau was fluctuating and contradictory within himself; though the general tone of his mind was indifference to spiritual boons, his sentiments were spontaneous and profound *whenever the voice of nature spoke;* he despised the *birthright* (xxv. 34), but regarded himself always as the *firstborn son* (ver. 32); he slighted the prophecy of *God* (xxv. 23), but coveted most anxiously the blessing of his *father;* he attributed to the latter a greater force than to the former; he hoped to neutralize the effect of the one by the weight of the other; he could not comprehend or feel the invisible, but he was keenly susceptible of the visible; his mind was not sublime, but his heart was full of pure and strong emotions; he saw in his father only the earthly progenitor, not the representative of the Deity — he was, indeed, the man of nature. As such he is described in the affecting scene of our text; he is designedly placed in marked contradistinction to his brother Jacob: nature, simplicity, deep and genuine affection on the one side; shrewdness, ambition, and indefinite, soaring, but unsatisfied intellectual craving on the other. This contrast not only implies the kernel and spirit of this narrative, but forms the centre of all Biblical notions. Hence Esau's vehement disappointment will receive its proper light; he deeply repented, that he had sold his birthright, but only because he believed, that he was for that reason justly deprived of the father's blessing due to the eldest son (ver. 36); he heard, without envy or animosity, that Jacob's descendants had been declared the future lords of his own progeny; leaving that prerogative unmurmuringly to his brother, he exclaimed: "Hast thou but one blessing, my father"? and burst forth into another flood of tears.

39, 40. Long had the fond father resisted the importunity of Esau, since he knew that he could predict to his favourite son little that could give satisfaction to himself, or prove acceptable to the other. This reluctance might have taught a wiser and more prudent man to renounce a certainty little calculated to brighten his pro-

wept. 39. And Isaac his father answered and said to him,

Behold, without the fatness of the earth shall be thy dwelling,
And without the dew of heaven from above.
40. And by thy sword shalt thou live;
Yet shalt thou serve thy brother:—
But when thou truly desirest *it*,
Thou shalt break his yoke from thy neck.—
41. And Esau hated Jacob on account of the blessing

spects. But now Isaac was forced, almost against his will, to reveal the painful truth; he described the abodes assigned to the Edomites as barren and cheerless, neither favoured by the fatness of the earth, nor the dew of heaven; their life, therefore, far from being one of calm enjoyment, would be passed in plunder and warfare; they would owe all to the sword, and nothing to the plough-share; but though always wielding sanguinary weapons, yet their lot would be subjection and servitude; though strong enough for pillage, they would be too rude for victory; they would be the slaves of their kindred tribes; —but their innate prowess, if tempered by prudence, and controlled by discipline, would always be powerful enough to secure or to restore their liberty; if roused by self-respect and energy, they would break the yoke, and be again free in their vast steppes. This is the image of Esau's history, at once forcible, faithful, and concise. The tracts inhabited by the Idumæans, the region of Mount Seir, and the deserted districts in the west and north-west of it, belong, perhaps, to the most desolate, the most sterile parts of the globe. There is frequently for many miles no village, no hut, to mark the trace of a human being; the soil is parched by the burning rays of the sun; solitude and devastation prevail around; those who, by ancestral traditions or indolence, are kept in these regions, seek refuge in caves or subterranean tents; the soil, yielding no more than a scanty verdure, scarcely sufficient for the maintenance of flocks, defies the industry of the husbandman; no waving ear, no golden fruit, no smiling flower, relieves the eye of the desponding wanderer; "the fatness of the earth, and the dew of heaven" are alike denied to the land. It is, however, hardly necessary to observe, that some parts of the districts of Idumæa, especially those nearer the southern frontiers of Palestine, and some other valleys, were capable of cultivation, and produced corn and wine, though scarcely more than was barely necessary for immediate consumption.—The other points of Isaac's predictions have already been illustrated; we have treated of the unbridled mode of life of the Edomites; of their subjection under the sceptre of the kings of Judah; and their ultimate deliverance in the reign of king Joram (see p. 324); but we may here more distinctly express an idea, before but passingly alluded to. The text intimates, that the freedom of the Idumæans was given in their own hands; that they might be independent whenever they would summon sufficient energy earnestly to wish it; and as the history of Esau is the mirror in which we are to see the destinies of his descendants, we may, in the repentance of the former, find a regret, on the part of the latter, that they had neglected their dignity when it was time to vindicate it; for they might, indeed, after their subjugation, have attempted fruitless revolts and invasions; but centuries elapsed before they could redeem the forfeited rights.

41. When Esau, leaving the presence of Isaac, no longer felt the sanctifying

with which his father had blessed him: and Esau said in his heart, Days of grief are at hand for my father; for I will slay my brother Jacob.—42. And these words of Esau her elder son were told to Rebekah: and she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said to him, Behold, thy brother Esau will take revenge upon thee by killing thee. 43. Now, therefore, my son, listen to my voice; and rise, flee to Laban my brother, to Haran; 44. And remain with him some time, until thy brother's

influence of a father's voice, every restraint was loosened, and he gave vent to the passion of his heart. He burnt with hatred towards his treacherous brother; and believing that he was able to annihilate the effect of the blessing, he was eager to quench his anger in the blood of the deceiver. But while he was wishing to perpetrate the sanguinary deed, the revered form of his aged father rose before his mind; it seemed for a moment to appease his ire: yet his hatred was too turbulent, too intense; he deplored the wretchedness into which he knew that his father would be plunged; yet he was unable to prevent it; instinct and passion struggled against each other; but his passion was stronger than his reason, though it did not extinguish his love, though it did not corrupt his heart. What an excellent picture of the true man of nature!

42—45. Rebekah knew well the generous, though vehement disposition of her eldest son. When, therefore, she was informed of his criminal intentions, which he was too artless sufficiently to conceal, she, with her usual calmness and prudence, devised a plan which prevented the impending bloodshed and misery. Acknowledging that Esau had, indeed, from an ordinary point of view, been seriously wronged (ver. 45); but convinced that his anger would soon cool down, if its object were removed; that rankling animosity could not linger in his breast; and that, thoughtless and forgiving, he was swayed by the impulse of the moment: Rebekah advised Jacob to escape to Mesopotamia, to her brother Laban, and there to await the time when he would be able to return with safety; she herself would watch that he should not longer be absent from the land promised to him and his seed than precaution demanded. But she seems to have supposed that the consideration of his own safety would alone have been insufficient to move Jacob to flee; for she deemed it necessary to add, as another stimulus, "why should I be bereaved of you both in one day"? She evidently alluded to the custom of the avenging of blood, which would have forced the nearest relative of Jacob to expiate his blood by killing Esau. Jacob's journey to Mesopotamia is thus freed from the low motives of selfishness and cowardice, and assumes the character of filial affection.

To the remarks on the avenging of blood, offered on another occasion (Comm. on Exodus xxi. 12—14), we add a few notices concerning its observance in the present time. Though the law of Mohammed teaches, that fathers are not to be punished for the crimes of their children, nor children for those of their parents, either in this world or in futurity; this doctrine is far from being generally acted upon: on the contrary, the *thar*, or duty of blood-revenge devolves upon every one within the fifth generation (or *Khomse*), and may be exercised against any one within the same degree of consanguinity; it is even sometimes asserted that the right to the blood-revenge is never lost; that it descends on both sides to the latest generation. Hence an

anger turneth away; 45. Until thy brother's anger turneth away from thee, and he forgetteth what thou hast done to him: then I shall send, and fetch thee from there: why should I be bereaved of both of you in one day?— 46. And Rebekah said to Isaac, I loathe my life because of the daughters of Heth: if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these, of the daughters of the land, of what avail is life to me?

Arab hesitates to tell his name to a stranger, or to mention that of his father or of his tribe, for a blood-feud might exist between them; children even are instructed to observe this caution; and strangers are, in the open country, regarded with extreme suspicion; but as guests are inviolable, a homicide is perfectly safe in the tent of a third person, or even in that of his own persecutor. The price of blood was legally one hundred camels (thirty of four years old, thirty of five years old, and forty with young); but to accept less was considered virtuous; and the compensation is different in different tribes; in some of them a mare, a black slave, and a gun are indispensable, besides a certain number of camels, or their value in other cattle or money. It is regarded as an act of great charity to contribute towards the blood-money, if the murderer is a poor man, who in order to collect the imposed sum, frequently, with a chain round his neck, wanders from tent to tent through the desert and all the towns and villages within his reach. To forgive a wound is deemed a highly meritorious act of moderation; but if, after having promised pardon, the wounded yet exacts retaliation, he is threatened with the everlasting fire. To pardon murder, as the avenger of blood has the power to do in Persia, was illegal both in the Mosaic and the Mohammedan law.—A kind of precedent for the cities of refuge, appointed by Moses, existed in the ancient and still prevailing usages of the Arabs. The homicide generally offers to the avenger of blood money as a compromise; but even if this is not accepted, he, according to immemorial custom, obtains a truce of "three days and four hours," during which time he may remove to another tribe, to implore its protection, which it is considered a duty to grant. His relatives generally flee with him; sometimes more than a hundred tents are removed in consequence of one murder; in almost all encampments such fugitives from other tribes are found; fear generally prevents them from returning to the nation from which they sprang; and they gradually amalgamate with their protectors. But a friendly tribe may not be near; the persecutor may be stronger than the new friends of the homicide; and no religious law forbids the former to abstain from insidious attacks; whereas the arrangements provided by the Mosaic Law, afforded him a secure and powerful refuge.

46. Rebekah, concealing from Isaac, for the sake of his tranquillity, the danger which menaced Jacob's life from the vehemence of Esau's passion, yet wishing to accelerate Jacob's departure, considerately said to her husband, with a certain affectation of vehemence, that she would regard her life as a burden and a plague, if Jacob were, like Esau, to marry a daughter of the hateful Hittites: and Isaac readily understood the meaning and scope of her remark (comp. xxvi. 35; xxiv. 3, 4).

CHAPTER XXVIII.

SUMMARY.—Isaac dismissed Jacob, on his departure to Mesopotamia, with a spontaneous blessing, and the repeated injunction not to take a wife from the daughters

of the Canaanites. The latter circumstance induced Esau to add Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael, to the two Hittite wives previously married. Jacob, on his way to Haran, stayed one night near Bethel, where God appeared to him in a wonderful dream, and encouraged him by most comprehensive promises. When he awoke, and felt the sacredness of the place, he sanctified the stone on which he had rested as a holy monument, and made a vow, that if he safely returned to his home, he would convert that monument into a sanctuary, and offer to God the tenth part of whatever property he should acquire.

1. And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and commanded him, and said to him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan. 2. Rise, go to Padan-aram, to the house of Bethuel, thy mother's father; and take for thee a wife from there of the daughters of Laban, thy mother's brother. 3. And may God, the Almighty, bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest become a multitude of people; 4. And may He give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee, that thou mayest inherit the land of thy sojourn, which God gave to Abraham. 5. And Isaac sent away Jacob: and he went to Padan-aram, to Laban, son of Bethuel the Aramæan, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother.—6. And when Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob, and sent him away to Padan-aram, to take for himself a wife from there—when he blessed him—and that he had commanded him, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan; 7. And that Jacob had obeyed his father and his mother, and was gone

1—5. Stimulated by Rebekah, Isaac urged Jacob to journey without delay to the plains of Mesopotamia, to repair to the house of Bethuel, and there to choose a wife from the daughters of Laban. But he was not perfectly satisfied with the unexpected result of a transaction in which he had merely been a passive instrument, but in which he yet recognised and revered the hand of a higher power. When, therefore, he dismissed Jacob, he gave him his free and spontaneous blessing. As it was occasioned by the contemplated marriage of Jacob, he naturally wished him, above all, a numerous and powerful progeny; and comprising in a single expression the whole aggregate of the highest boons, he added, that God would give him and his seed "the blessing of Abraham." As this journey forms a most decided epoch in Jacob's life, the text relates it in the most accurate terms; and as if briefly summing up the past events, it adds a minute genealogy: "And Isaac sent away Jacob: and he went to the low-land of Aram, to Laban, the son of Bethuel, the Aramæan, the brother of Rebekah, the mother of Jacob and Esau" (ver. 5); now, perhaps, intentionally placing Jacob before his elder brother.

6—9. Esau, true to himself, soon forgot his animosity against Jacob. Not only did he hear with almost perfect calmness of the new blessing which his brother had received; but as, by the solemn injunction of Isaac, he was reminded that the matri-

to Padan-aram; 8. And when Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan displeased Isaac his father: 9. Esau went to Ishmael, and took, besides the wives he had, Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife.

monial alliances concluded by him with the Hittite women were regarded with displeasure by his parents, and wishing to please and satisfy them — like a true rustic in intellect, unable to rise above the sphere of the natural, he took a *third* wife, a daughter of *Ishmael*, without dismissing his two former wives, who had blessed him with children.

III.— THE HISTORY OF JACOB AND ESAU

CHAPTERS XXVIII. 10 TO XXXVI. 43.

10. And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, and went towards Haran. 11. And he arrived at a certain place, and stayed there over night; for the sun had set; and he took *one* of the stones of the place, and put *it* under his head, and lay down in that place. 12. And he dreamt, and, behold, a ladder *was* placed on the earth, and its top reached to heaven: and, behold, the angels of God *were* ascending and descending on it. 13. And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I *am* the Lord, the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee shall I give it, and to thy seed;

10—15. On his way from the south of Palestine to the regions of the Euphrates, Jacob was surprised by the night in an open field near the town of Bethel. Why did he not enter the town, where he might have found a resting-place both more safe and more convenient? As this question is too clear to have been overlooked by the Biblical writer, he must have had an intention and reason in not obviating it. Nobody can deny that the scene here described has a symbolical meaning, and that it typifies some of the chief features of Israel's later history. The true sense of this portion can, therefore, be ascertained only by viewing it in the light of anticipative history. Now, both Abraham and Jacob are, in many respects, embodiments of the destinies of the Hebrews. But while Abraham represents chiefly their internal or religious history, Jacob foreshadows their external life, political and social. Abraham is calm and dignified; his greatness, obedience and faith; his career, devotion and submission: Jacob is active and scheming; his life, combat with adversity and hardship; while his character required a long training by struggles and tribulations. Who does not recognise in the latter patriarch the image of Israel's political history? Compelled to conquer a populous and fortified land with their swords and their bows, and constantly to fight against more warlike enemies;

14. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. 15. And, behold, I *am* with thee, and I shall guard thee wherever thou goest, and shall bring thee back into this land; for I shall not leave thee, until I have done *that* of which I have spoken to thee.—16. And Jacob awoke from his sleep,

open to the perpetual invasions and devastations of perfidious tribes; isolated, unaided, thrown upon their own strength and their own feeble resources: could they expect to triumph without the will and manifest support of Providence? Jacob sleeps in the open field, exposed to the attacks of wild beasts and wayfaring marauders, protected only by the "Guardian of Israel, who never sleeps nor slumbers." The anxious and paternal care bestowed by God upon His people was to be forcibly portrayed at the outset of the independent history of their immediate ancestor, when he left his father's house to seek refuge and to acquire wealth in a distant land, with nothing but his staff to accompany him on his long and uncertain journey (xxxii. 11). Every part and trait of this portion has, therefore, solely the end of expressing God's watchful providence for Israel; and we shall thus not be at a loss to comprehend why Jacob is represented staying over night, not in a well-protected town, but under the canopy of heaven, in the chaste brilliancy of the eternal stars; we shall understand, that the ladder resting on earth and reaching into heaven, is the invisible bridge which connects men with God, the human deeds with the human destinies, the manifest effects with the great but hidden Cause; that the angels ascending and descending the ladder show that the connection is truly spiritual and permanent, through the heart and mind, through everything that is Divine in man; we shall be convinced that God, standing at the top of this ladder, is conceived as the source from which all human blessing proceeds, and as the aim to which all human aspirations tend; that He guides and dispenses, teaches and consoles, according to His infinite wisdom; that "as the heaven is above the earth, so are His thoughts above the thoughts of man" (Isai. lv. 9). And if Jacob here represents the people of Israel, both the ladder and the angels express deeply and beautifully the constant and uninterrupted solicitude of God towards Israel, and the internal, warm, and holy yearning which Israel should entertain towards God and His truth. Since, then, the idea of *Providence* is chiefly embodied in this vision, the assurances given by God to Jacob do not merely repeat the former promises regarding the possession of the land, the numerous descendants, and the mighty extension of their dominion; they do not merely rise to the prophetic promise concerning the blessings which would be spread, through Israel, over all the nations of the earth: but they add an explicit and binding guarantee, that God would guard Jacob in all his paths; that He would lead him back safely to the land of his birth, and that He would not forsake him till all His promises were accomplished (ver. 16; comp. xii. 2, 3; xiii. 14—16; xxvi. 3, 4).

16—22. When Jacob awoke, he felt the powerful reality of the dream; the words of the God of "his father Abraham and of Isaac" vibrated within his mind; and he at once gave a striking proof of the effect which both the vision and the promise had produced upon him. As God had descended to him, so he attempted to ascend to God; a religious awe came over him; his mind was agitated by a higher

and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew *it* not. 17. And he was afraid, and said, How awful *is* this place! this *is* none other but the house of God, and this *is* the gate of heaven. 18. And Jacob rose early in the morning, and took the stone which he had put under his head, and set it up *for* a monument, and poured oil upon its top. 19. And he called the name of that place Beth-el: but the name of the town *was* originally Luz.

emotion; and everything connected with the dream assumed, in his eyes, a character of holiness. The place, especially, where he had reposed was regarded by him as "the gate of heaven," since it had manifested to him the presence of the Deity; it was the "house of God," since here He had appeared to him, promising assistance when his oppressed heart needed it most, and attended by His heavenly messengers, who represent the visible acts of His omnipotence (see pp. 259, 260). This was, most probably, the place later distinguished by the presence of the holy Tabernacle, where sacrifices were offered and vows were fulfilled (see p. 213). It cannot, therefore, surprise us, that this spot was considered as pre-eminently holy. For although the glory of God pervades the universe, so that not even the heaven of heavens can hold it, some localities were deemed as His special abodes, where men assemble, pour out their hearts, and obtain peace; and as long as religion is connected with a visible worship it will be impossible for the human mind to divest itself of the notion that there are certain places more properly hallowed by the Divine presence. But although Canaan was the holy land, and Moriah the holy mountain, appointed by God for His dwelling-place (Exod. xv. 17); it was distinctly promised, in accordance with the doctrine of Divine omnipresence, that God appears and blesses man at whatever place He is invoked (Exod. xx. 21). Jacob, made aware by the dream, that he had slept on one of those favoured spots, singled out for a future sanctuary, and fearful that he had sinned by employing it for a profane purpose, exclaimed, in mingled surprise and apprehension: "How awful is this place! This is nothing else but the house of God!"

But he regarded the stone, also, on which he had rested his head, as holy; he consecrated it as an altar, by a rite which was usual, not only throughout the East, but also among some northern nations. Pouring oil, the emblem of holiness and dignity, over the stone, and adding, perhaps, a libation of wine, he endowed it with a higher significance, and marked the spot where the Tabernacle, with its double altar, of incense and of burnt-offerings, was later erected. Such sacred stones bore the name of *Baetylia*; and as Jacob called the place *Bethel*, it is not extravagant to suppose that both words are identical, and that the patriarch simply designated the stone as a Baetylion, and that later the town assumed the Hebraized name of Bethel. It is reported that even now it is customary in the East for travellers to erect stones in different parts of the road, and there to offer up supplications for their safe return.

In order to exhibit still more impressively the character of this event, Jacob is stated to have uttered a solemn vow, in which the *providence* of God is again not only the chief feature, but forms the very centre. As a lonely and powerless pilgrim, he trusts himself entirely to the guidance and protection of God; he asks His aid and love; he prays for the necessities of subsistence, for bread and garments; he entreats Him to bring him back to his parental roof; he demands, in

20. And Jacob offered a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will guard me on this way which I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, 21. And I return again to my father's house in peace, and the Lord is my God: 22. Then this stone, which I have set *for* a monument, shall be a house of God: and of all that Thou wilt give me, I shall surely give the tenth part to Thee.

a word, that the God of his ancestors may prove Himself as *his* God also; and he promises, on his part, faithful and devoted piety, manifesting itself both in the adoration of God and in acts of charity towards men; for he pledged himself to regard the place of the vision as the house of God, and, imitating the example of Abraham, to devote, in the name of the Deity, the tenth part of his property to his fellow-men. All this obtains a greater force, if it is remembered that the worship of Bethel degenerated later into a detested idolatry; that "the house of God" was degraded into a "house of wickedness"; and that the piety of the patriarch was a warning and an exhortation for the future generations.

CHAPTER XXIX.

SUMMARY.—Jacob, arriving at a well in the neighbourhood of Haran, was, on his inquiry, informed by the shepherds, who there assembled to water their flocks, of the approach of Rachel, the daughter of Laban, Rebekah's brother. After an affectionate salutation, Rachel announced the relative to her father, who hastened to introduce him into his house, and pressed him to stay. Jacob, loving Rachel, agreed with Laban to serve for her seven years; but after the lapse of this period, he was, by a fraud of Laban, who excused himself by the custom of the country, married to Leah, her elder and less beautiful sister. He consented, therefore, to serve seven years more for Rachel. He became, by Leah, the father of Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah: but Rachel was barren.

1. Then Jacob lifted up his feet, and came into the land of the children of the east. 2. And he looked, and

1. Rich in distant hopes, but cheerless in his immediate prospects, Jacob left the land of promise. He was a true pilgrim; and his whole life was a wearisome and changeful pilgrimage. The gold of his capacious and lofty mind was to be purified from its strong alloy of dishonesty and cunning in the furnace of misery and toil; his moral education commenced at his departure from the parental house, and after many tribulations only, resulted in that peace of mind which is at once the surest symptom and the choicest reward of true virtue. Jacob's life has always been considered as a type: we see in it, indeed, the eternal image of man's protracted contests, both against the foe in his heart and with his destinies, till at last the internal enemy is either wearied out by his resistance, or expelled by his energy, or reconciled by his sufferings, see on xxxiv. 1—4. Among the earliest seeds sown by Jacob were deceit and craft: and flight and exile were the firstfruits of his harvest. While his grandfather's servant had undertaken the journey to the town of Nahor with ten camels laden with all the most precious treasures (xxiv. 10); the offspring of the alliance concluded in consequence of that journey, left his

behold, *there was* a well in the field, and, behold, there *were* three flocks of sheep lying by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks: and the stone upon the mouth of the well *was* great. 3. And thither all the flocks were gathered: and they rolled the stone from the mouth of the well, and watered the sheep, and put the stone again upon the mouth of the well to its place.—4. And Jacob said to them, My brethren, whence *are* you? And they said, From Haran *are* we. 5. And he said to them, Do you know Laban, the son of Nahor? And they said, We know *him*. 6. And he said, *Is* he well? And they said, *He is* well; and, behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep. 7. And he said, Behold, the day *is* still long; *it is*

father's roof as a poor wanderer, without a friend or an attendant, and without an animal to lighten the fatigues of the way.

2, 3. Approaching the goal of his journey, he halted at a well, like Abraham's servant. But though it was not precisely the *same* well, a certain analogy between both episodes is obviously intended. The author wishing to impress with the utmost possible distinctness that the God of Abraham and Isaac was also the God of Jacob, and that He was as gracious to the latter as He had been to the former; repeated in the life of the one some features from the life of the other; just as the history of Isaac is, in many respects, perfectly parallel to that of Abraham (see p. 310). The three patriarchs form one whole; one is the heir and successor of the other with regard to their historical vocation; Abraham might already have become the father of the founders of the twelve tribes; his faith and his virtue would have entitled him to this privilege; but the time was not yet fulfilled; and his history lingers, therefore, and is re-echoed in the career of his son and of his grandson.—The well was covered lest the sand, when agitated by the wind, should be driven into the water; but the stone which covered it was designedly large and heavy, that a part of the shepherds might not deprive the others of their due share, or, perhaps, as has been observed, to prevent the well being opened too frequently, by which the dust would enter more copiously.

4—12. Jacob, though arriving as a helpless stranger, was strengthened by the consciousness of his brilliant mission; he, therefore, addressed the unknown shepherds not only with cordiality, but with self-assurance and authority, and ventured even a gentle reproof of indolence. The shepherds might have been astonished at this tone, and might have regarded it as an assumption; but they answered him dispassionately. The men of the town of Nahor, of Rebekah, Rachel, and Leah, are, no doubt, intentionally represented as peaceful and moral; for it was only under the influence of a virtuous community that the future mothers of the tribes of Israel could be reared; and it was neither caprice nor pride which induced Abraham, as well as Isaac, to insist upon alliances with the daughters of Terah; but this wish was prompted by the internal and moral affinity between all the members of his family (see p. 299).—The surprise of the shepherds at the boldness of the stranger was soon succeeded by a very different sentiment. He achieved before their eyes a feat which compelled their admiration and reverence; he rolled away from the mouth of the well the heavy stone which the shepherds of three flocks had been unable to move (ver. 2); and he thus proved that he was supported by the preternatural assistance

not yet time that the cattle should be gathered: water the sheep, and go *and* pasture *them*. 8. And they said, We cannot, until all the flocks are gathered; then they roll the stone from the mouth of the well, and we water the sheep. 9. While he yet spoke with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep, for she *was* a shepherdess. 10. And when Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of Laban, his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban, his mother's brother, Jacob approached, and rolled the stone from the mouth of the well, and watered the flock of Laban, his mother's brother. 11. And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice, and wept. 12. And Jacob told Rachel that he *was* her father's kinsman, and that he was

of the Deity; that his spirits were undaunted, and his strength unwearied. Such is power of a mind earnestly yearning after some great aim.—The shepherds acquainted Jacob that Laban, the brother of Rebekah, was in prosperous circumstances, and that his daughter would soon come to the well with his flocks: and whilst they were still conversing, the beautiful Rachel approached. At her sight all the fond feelings of home were at once roused; he beheld before him "the daughter of his mother's brother"; delight and sorrow mingled in his heart; and overwhelmed by his feelings, he paid his tribute to nature by a spontaneous flood of tears. He had been driven from the circle of his family, and now saw that being who he felt was destined to become to him the centre of a new and dearer home. But Rachel also was carried away by the remarkable deed of the stranger; she looked upon him as upon some favourite of God; she *believed* his words; and when he kissed her, she considered it no insult, no undue liberty. Then only he told her that he was Jacob, and she entertained no doubt; her heart at once opened towards him; for she felt as if a miracle had been performed before her eyes.

13—20. Following her first impulse, she hastened home, and informed her father of their relative's arrival. This and some of the following traits vividly recall the corresponding meeting between Rebekah and Abraham's steward; but it must be borne in mind, that this resemblance is designed and significant. Laban's qualities are here delineated with no less favourable colours than on the previous occasion; he is cordial and hospitable, ready to serve and to be useful; he loses no time in offering his hearty welcome to Jacob, and with true affection at once leads the poor pilgrim into his house. Is there in all this any ground for depreciating Laban's character? — Jacob returned the kindness of his host by free communications; for "he told Laban all these things." What did he relate to him? Evidently, how he, the son of a wealthy father, came alone, a destitute stranger, into the distant land; how little prospects he had of a speedy return; and how justly he had to fear his brother's passion and anger. But Laban, far from feeling less warmly for his nephew on account of his poverty and exile, exclaimed with increased fervour: "thou art yet my bone and my flesh"! cheered him, and urged him to stay in his house.

Jacob was of too active a disposition to eat the bread of idleness; he took part in all the occupations of the house and the field; and worked unremittingly, like a bondsman. But Laban, too generous to demand such services, and certainly too just to accept them without compensation, re-

Rebekah's son: and she ran and told *it* her father.—13. And when Laban heard the tidings of Jacob, his sister's son, he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kissed him, and brought him to his house. And he told Laban all these things. 14. And Laban said to him, Surely thou *art* my bone and my flesh. And he abode with him a month's time. 15. And Laban said to Jacob, *Art* thou indeed my kinsman, and shouldst thou serve me for nought? tell me what thy wages *shall be*. 16. And Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder *was* Leah, and the name of the younger *was* Rachel. 17. And the eyes of Leah *were* tender; but Rachel was beautiful in form and beautiful in appearance. 18. And Jacob loved Rachel,

quested Jacob to fix his wages. The latter, mindful of the paternal injunctions and of the ostensible purpose of his journey, well aware that he had passed the meridian of his life, and that he, almost an octogenarian, could, even according to patriarchal notions, no longer be considered a young man; unhesitatingly demanded in matrimony Laban's second daughter, Rachel, whom he loved, and for whom he offered to serve seven years. Orientals prefer alliances within the circle of their own relatives; marriages between cousins are in especial favour; Laban consented, therefore, readily to Jacob's proposal, saying: "it is better that I should give her to thee than to another man"; and he invited him to enter forthwith upon his duties. And the text adds in beautiful simplicity: "And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed to him but a few days, for the love he bore to her": words breathing the purest tenderness, and expressing more emphatically than the flowery hyperboles of romantic phraseology, the deep attachment of an affectionate heart. Love capable of shortening seven laborious years into a term of insignificant brevity, is a flame animating and purifying the soul; a sacred longing, forming its own delight and happiness. It would, therefore, be truly surprising, were we to find in our narrative features coinciding with the rude and undeveloped eastern practices. Let us examine it. As Jacob possessed no property, and could not, therefore, *buy* his wife, he paid for her by seven years of service. But was this indeed so degrading as it has, by almost general consent, been denounced to be? It is alleged, that, as the wife is, in the East, regarded only as a kind of slave, first subordinate to the father, and then to the husband, she was, like the slave, acquired by purchase, and for almost exactly the same price. Such certainly was and is the case among many uncivilised tribes. But does the purchase not admit of another construction? Among some nations, the marriage-price is distinctly regarded as a compensation due to the parents for the trouble and expense incurred by the education of the daughter. From this view, there is but one step to the notion, that the parents deserve the gratitude of the man to whom they give their child; and the Hebrews, who assigned to the women a position eminently high and honourable, who regarded the wife as an integral part of the husband, and as the indispensable condition of his happiness, and among whom it was a proverbial adage, that "an excellent wife is far more precious than riches": the Hebrews bought their wives as a treasure and the most valuable possession. It may be seriously asked, whether such a purchase was, *in principle*, not more dignified than the custom according to which the wife buys, as it were, a husband by her

and said, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter. 19. And Laban said, *It is* better that I give her to thee, than that I should give her to another man: abide with me. 20. And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed to him *but* a few days, for the love he had to her.—21. And Jacob said to Laban, Give *me* my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may go to her. 22. And Laban assembled all the men of the place, and made a feast. 23. And it was in the evening, and he took Leah his daughter, and brought her to him; and he went to her. 24. And Laban gave to his daughter Leah Zilpah his maid *for* a maid. 25. And it was in the morning, and, behold, it *was* Leah: and he said to Laban,

dowry, and in consequence of which the daughters of poor parents are in a very precarious position, while, in the East, daughters are at least no burden on their fathers. *In practice*, that custom is certainly liable to considerable abuses; heartless or avaricious parents, without consulting the inclination of their daughters, may sell them to those who bid the highest price: but scarcely any principle, however lofty, is safe against abuse; besides, it was a law among most tribes, that the daughter's consent must first be obtained; and it was a custom among some, that the money received by the parents should be applied for the benefit of the bride or the young couple. But supposed even, that the manner of courting and acquiring the wife was not in every respect noble and delicate among the Hebrews, it certainly did not affect the relative position of husband and wife; the one was no master, the other no slave; the usual *customs* could, therefore, safely be retained, as long as they did not endanger the beautiful principles which guaranteed the dignity of the other sex.

21—30. When Laban permitted, and even demanded, his near kinsman to serve seven years for his daughter, he was no longer true to his usual generosity; while in the execution of the marriage contract he very nearly approached Jacob in cunning, by substituting the elder daughter for the younger one. His reason and motive might not have been objectionable; it might have been a deeply-rooted custom not to allow the younger to marry before her elder sister, as it was a strict religious precept among the Hindoos; but Jacob was perfectly unacquainted with this trans-euphratic law; it was, therefore, scarcely less than insolence on the part of Laban, when, after the lapse of seven years, he excused his fraud by a custom about which he had insidiously kept the stranger in total ignorance. This discloses a baseness in Laban's character, arousing contempt and aversion; but it ought not to blind us against the redeeming qualities of his heart. In the human mind, fragrant flowers often blossom surprisingly by the side of noxious weeds. The deceit of Laban was practicable, on account of the custom, by which the bride is, on the day of marriage, conducted *veiled* to her future husband (see p. 311). A Divine nemesis has been justly recognised in this incident; for the abject stratagem practised by Jacob was punished by a similar deception practised upon him, though scarcely of quite so culpable a nature. Hence Jacob called Laban's deed an imposition, just as Esau had described Jacob's conduct as insidious "cheating."—But how did Jacob act on this provoking occasion? Content with simply expressing his disapprobation, and apparently satisfied with the dishonest excuse of Laban, he at once agreed to

What *is* this thou hast done to me? did I not serve with thee for Rachel? wherefore then hast thou deceived me? 26. And Laban said, It is not done so in our place, to give the younger before the elder. 27. Fulfil her week, and we will give thee this one also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years. 28. And Jacob did so, and fulfilled her week: and he gave him Rachel his daughter to be his wife. 29. And Laban gave to Rachel his daughter Bilhah his maid to be her maid. 30. And he went to Rachel also, and he certainly loved Rachel more than Leah, and served with him yet seven other years.—31. And when the Lord saw that Leah *was* hated, He opened her womb: but Rachel *was* barren.

commence another period of servitude for his beloved Rachel. Luther confessed that, under similar circumstances, he would not have been able to display so much patience; he admired it as almost superhuman; for Jacob had a legal claim upon Rachel (comp. vers. 18, 19). But we may suppose, on the one hand, that the patriarch did not, by quarrelling with the father of Rachel, wish to endanger the family ties which he intended to form; and, on the other hand, perhaps some thought of a well-deserved retribution, such as has just been pointed out, might have forced itself upon his active mind—teaching him to bear the drudgery as a penalty and an atonement. Certain it is, that his double and severe servitude is represented by the Biblical writer as a degradation and a punishment for the deceitful acquisition of his superiority: "in the day he was consumed by the heat, and by the frost in the night; and sleep fled from his eyes" (xxxi. 40): this was one of the trials designed to purify him; the man, whose proud mind enclosed the hopes of a grand and glorious future, and whose mental eye saw his progeny the lords of mighty kings, was to bend as a slave to the will of a heathen. —But the fraud of Laban was not only a moral offence in itself; it was the more deplorable, as it destroyed the principle of monogamy to which the patriarchs on the whole adhered. Jacob had intended to marry Rachel alone; and when he found himself, against his will, allied with Leah, his heart could not renounce her from whom he expected the best part of his happiness; he took her to wife besides Leah; nor was he permitted to dismiss the latter after the solemnization of the marriage. The voice of nature, in this instance, spoke too loud to be disregarded in favour of a principle which, even centuries after the commencement of the present era, it was found impossible to enforce by a general law.—In accordance with Oriental custom, the daughters of Laban, when marrying, received each their maid-servant, who formed the most valuable part of their dowry, extremely modest in every other respect; and frequently the nurses followed the young wives into their new homes.—Marriages were celebrated by a feast, generally lasting seven days; Laban proposed, therefore, that Jacob should first finish the festive week for Leah; he would then give him Rachel also, for whom he expected seven other years of Jacob's services. This is the clear tenour of the text.

31—35. Jacob, in demanding Rachel not only with impatience, but a certain impetuosity (ver. 21), was stimulated not more by love than by a regard to the prophecies he had received; for he then numbered about 85 years. The fruits of marriage

32. And Leah conceived, and bore a son, and she called his name Reuben: for she said, Surely the Lord hath looked upon my affliction; for now my husband will love me. 33. And she conceived again, and bore a son; and she said, Surely the Lord hath heard that I *am* hated, and He hath given me this *son* also: and she called his name

were not withheld from him. But here also the Deity had to perform a necessary act of justice. Leah was not graced with the same attractions as Rachel; her eyes, those mirrors of the soul, and often the reflex of the mind, wanted lustre and brilliancy; and yet were the ancient Hebrews especially susceptible of the charms and magic of beautiful eyes; a vivid; radiating, and energetic eye in a man, and a deep, clear, and gentle one in a woman, were irresistible recommendations; no wonder, therefore, that Jacob preferred Rachel, who was "beautiful of form, and beautiful in appearance." But should Leah, the elder sister, suffer by an external defect? All advantages, and beauty among them, are indeed gifts from the Almighty, granted to serve or to delight; external graces also have their usefulness; the moral influence of the beautiful is indisputable, however various schools may differ in defining it; the fact is certain, though the principles are less obvious; yet, blind worship of beauty is both unjust and absurd; nobler than that which appears to the senses, are those attributes of man which are invisible; though the frame is the receptacle, it is not necessarily the exponent, of the mind; the laws of external and internal beauty are as different as the finite and the infinite. The cultivation of the beautiful is, indeed, the first step towards civilisation; but it is no more than a means of education; it has accomplished its purpose when it has contributed to awaken the interest for thought and truth; the Greeks were an element in the development of mankind; but their mission ceased when they had opened the minds of men for the reception of abstract ideas; and the sentence which a Greek sage wrote over his door: "nothing ugly must enter," was to be superseded by the Biblical maxim: "deceitful is gracefulness, and vain is beauty; a woman who feareth the Lord, she alone deserveth praise" (Prov. xxxi. 30). The Book of Genesis points, indeed, to the three stages implied in these remarks. While the first woman was merely "she who gives life" (*Eve*); the daughter of Lamech, seven generations later, was the *beautiful* (*Naamah*); this was certainly a progress (see p. 102); but many centuries were required to elapse before men ceased to regard beauty both as the test of worth, and a proof of special Divine favour. To contribute towards this important lesson, is the end of this portion; for, "when the Lord saw that Leah was hated, He opened her womb: but Rachel was barren": by the same act, He taught Jacob wisdom, and procured justice to Leah. The latter was clearly aware of this turning-point in her life; for when she gave birth to a son, she exclaimed: "Surely, the Lord hath looked upon my affliction; for now my husband will love me." Nor does she seem to have been unworthy of being blessed with offspring; the love of her husband was the sole object of her thoughts and feelings; it formed the sum total of her happiness, and occupied her attention unremittingly; for when her second son was born, she again said: "Surely the Lord hath heard that I am hated, and He hath given me this son also"; and at the birth of the third son, she gave utterance to her feelings in a similar strain: "Now this time will my husband be attached to me, because I have born him three sons." But when she believed she had secured her husband's affection by "a threefold cord," she showed that she had a grateful as well as a loving heart, and that she was capable of religious as well as of natural sentiments; for the birth of her fourth son urged her

Simeon. 34. And she conceived again, and bore a son; and she said, Now this time will my husband be joined to me, for I have born him three sons: therefore was his name called Levi. 35. And she conceived again, and bore a son: and she said, This time I will praise the Lord; therefore she called his name Judah: and she ceased bearing.

to exclaim: "Now will I praise the Lord"; and she called his name Judah. Such excellence of character, fully deserving the reward it received, forced upon Jacob the reflection, that for conjugal happiness a *virtuous* wife is indispensable, whether adorned by beauty or not. A later portion of the Pentateuch further pursues these thoughts, and embodies them in a legal precept. As polygamy was not interdicted, it might happen that a man loved one wife less than another; in order, therefore, to protect the former against his caprice, he was forbidden to deprive her son, if he was the firstborn, of his due privileges, or to confer the birthright upon the son of the more beloved wife (Deut. xxi. 15—17). For, as children are granted or withheld by God, according to His inscrutable designs—such is the Biblical doctrine—it would be impiety on the part of man to change the Eternal Will.

CHAPTER XXX.

SUMMARY.—Jacob became, further, the father of Dan and Naphtali by Bilhah, Rachel's maid; of Gad and Asher by Zilpah, Leah's maid; of Issachar, Zebulon, and Dinah, by Leah; and of Joseph, by Rachel. He then intended to return to Canaan. But when Laban, desirous to reward him for his past services, asked him to fix his own compensation, he applied a stratagem by which, in a period of six years, he acquired very considerable wealth.

1. And when Rachel saw that she bore to Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister, and she said to Jacob, Give me children; and if not, I die. 2. And Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel: and he said, *Am* I in God's stead,

1, 2. The ideas which the fruitfulness of Leah was intended to enforce, are, from another side, enjoined by the barrenness of Rachel. The character of the latter shows dark spots and serious defects; she was envious against a sister over whom she had many personal advantages; she was impetuous and passionate; she had the vehement temperament of Rebekah; like the latter, she broke forth in angry exclamations; but more irrational than her mother-in-law, who sought relief in prayer and oracles, she argued with her husband about her sterility: "Give me children," she cried, "or else I die!" She had not yet learnt the great practical truth that barreness is not necessarily a punishment, a curse, or an ignominy; instead of bearing her lot with resignation, she was roused into bitterness and rage; she showed a want of faith and submission; this alone explains why "Jacob's anger was kindled against her," and why he answered her: "Am I in God's stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb?" (comp. l. 19). He desired to remind her, with a due emphasis, that no man can fathom the plans of Providence in denying children; and though this reproof was not without effect upon Rachel, years passed away before her fondest wish was realised. Sarah, Rebekah, and

who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb? 3. And she said, Behold my maid Bilhah, go to her, and she shall bear upon my knees, that I may also have children by her. 4. And she gave him Bilhah her handmaid to wife: and Jacob went to her. 5. And Bilhah conceived, and bore to Jacob a son. 6. And Rachel said, God hath judged me, and hath also heard my voice, and hath given me a son: therefore she called his name Dan. 7. And Bilhah Rachel's maid conceived again, and bore to Jacob a second son. 8. And Rachel said, Struggles of God have I struggled with my sister, and I have prevailed: and she called his name Naphtali.—9. When Leah saw that she had ceased bearing, she took Zilpah her

Rachel, the wife of Jacob's love, were barren for a long period; their children were to be regarded as *the seed of God*, for they were the mothers of the people of God.

3—8. The first result of Jacob's admonition was Rachel's proposal that he should take her maid-servant, Bilhah, and that she would recognise her offspring as her own. This was regarded as a sacrifice, and as an act of humility and self-control, deserving the reward of God (ver. 18; see p. 241). It appears that no distinct rule existed among the Hebrews with regard to the children resulting from such connections; they either enjoyed perfect equality with those of the legal wife, if the jealousy of the latter and that of her children permitted it, as was the case with the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah; or, placed into a less close relation to the family, they were dependent for property on the generosity of the father; thus Ishmael was dismissed from the paternal house with presents (comp. xxi. 10).—When Bilhah bore a son, Rachel, indeed, acknowledged him as her own; but her heart was but partially corrected; jealousy still lingered in its depth: and if this is less clear from the words which she pronounced at the birth of this child, "God hath judged me, and hath also heard my voice, and hath given me a son"; it is evident from the exulting remark which she uttered when Bilhah bore a second son. She certainly now recognised the finger of God in withholding children from her; the reproachful question of her husband: "Am I in God's stead," had sunk deep into her mind; she knew that she had "to struggle with God"; but this struggle was not pure; it was alloyed by the spirit of strife and envious emulation; it was prompted in her much more by the desire of being, at least, equal to her sister, than of reconciling the Divine displeasure; hence she combined in her exclamation these two elements of combat with God and with her sister; but it can scarcely be doubtful upon which of the two she put the greater stress, "I have struggled heavenly struggles with my sister, and I have prevailed"; her envy was partially satisfied; and the victory over God derived, in her eyes, its greatest value from its being, at the same time, a victory over her sister.

9—13. Leah, seeing that after the birth of her fourth son she ceased to be fruitful, but anxious to preserve and, if possible, to enhance the affection of her husband, offered, without much reluctance, her hand-maid, Zilpah, to Jacob, to increase, through her, his progeny. She had no other object but the happinsss of him on whom she had centred all her hopes. When, therefore, Zilpah successively gave birth to two sons, gratitude,

maid, and gave her to Jacob to wife. 10. And Zilpah Leah's maid bore to Jacob a son. 11. And Leah said, In felicity! and she called his name Gad. 12. And Zilpah Leah's maid bore to Jacob a second son. 13. And Leah said, For my happiness! for the daughters will call me happy: and she called his name Asher.—14. And Reuben went in the days of wheat-harvest, and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them to his mother Leah. And Rachel said to Leah, Give me, I pray thee, of thy son's mandrakes. 15. And she said to her, *Is it too* little that thou hast taken my husband, that thou wouldst take my son's mandrakes also? And Rachel said, Therefore he shall lie with thee to-night for thy son's mandrakes.

as at the birth of her own fourth son, lent language to an overflowing heart; and with unmingled delight she exclaimed: "in felicity," and "for my happiness," and called the sons Gad and Asher. So clearly defined and so distinctly drawn is Leah's character, which is the more unmistakeable if compared with that of her sister: the justice of God is described as manifestly active, inculcating grave lessons, profound in principle, and fraught with momentous consequences for practical life.

14—24. But in order to display the difference of disposition of the two sisters still more strikingly, a test is chosen, which dispels every doubt. Love of progeny, which forms one of the strongest feelings among primitive nations, at an early period, directed their attention to the medicinal properties of plants supposed to be conducive to fruitfulness. And as children are blessings of God, and everything that nature yields is produced by Him for the use of man; the application of such means is, according to Biblical notions also, in no way objectionable. Like every complaint or disease, sterility may be cured by all remedies placed by Providence within the reach of man. But it was the end of Mosaism, though acknowledging the grandeur of nature, to raise man above her dominion, to lead him to the Creator instead of the creature, and to substitute an intelligent Will for an unchangeable Necessity. Though nature supplies the plants, God blesses their effects; and though man is not only justified but bound to exert his own energy and intelligence, God accomplishes what He desires according to His wisdom. This is the Biblical doctrine. And how did Leah and Rachel act? Reuben, the eldest son of Leah, finding in the fields certain fruits (*Dudaim*, or mandrakes), believed to possess the power of promoting conception, brought them to his mother, who had for some time been afflicted with barrenness. Her first impulse was to employ them for its removal. She, therefore, replied to Rachel, who begged them of her, with a certain indignation, mingled, however, with faithful love for her husband (ver. 15). But she was far from attaching a decisive or essential value to the fruits; and when, therefore, her sister, with her usual tenacity, insisted upon obtaining them, she readily ceded them to her, relying for fruitfulness upon the mercy of God rather than the powers of nature; a sentiment which she distinctly expressed when she gave birth to her fifth son (ver. 18). Rachel, still enslaved by pagan superstitions, as she later stealthily carried away the idols of her father, and, purchasing the mandrakes with a certain sacrifice, expected from them a deliver-

16. And Jacob came from the field in the evening, and Leah went out to meet him, and said, Come to me; for surely I have hired thee with my son's mandrakes. And he lay with her that night. 17. And God listened to Leah, and she conceived, and bore to Jacob a fifth son. 18. And Leah said, God hath given me my hire, because I gave my maid to my husband: and she called his name Issachar. 19. And Leah conceived again, and bore to Jacob a sixth son. 20. And Leah said, God hath presented me *with* a goodly present; now will my husband dwell with me, because I have born him six sons: and she called his name Zebulun. 21. And afterwards she bore a daughter, and called her name Dinah.—22. And God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her, and opened

ance from her sterility; but she had still to learn that offspring are granted by the beneficence of God alone, and that the products of nature are unavailing without His aid. In due time, and in accordance with His own plans, "God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her, and opened her womb" (ver. 22); at last she bore a son, Joseph, by whom she believed her reproach was removed; and, wandering with her thoughts into the future, as was natural in her position, she broke forth in the ardent hope that God might give her another son.

Such being the important lessons implied by the introduction of the Dudaim, we may the less regret our inability of fixing the precise fruit intended. The Hebrew name seems indeed to be generic, signifying a *love*-fruit; and in no cognate language has a similar botanical name as yet been discovered. But the almost unanimous authority of the ancient translations is in favour of *mandrakes*. The *Mandragora vernalis* has, like the other species, narcotic properties, both in the root, and in the fruits; and was, therefore, used as a means for allaying pains; but was also called Circæa, because it excites the passion of love; Venus herself was denominated Mandragorites; the Arabs call it "devil's apple"; further, Pythagoras describes it as changing man; and it was said to cause rage in men and animals; the root, when eaten boiled, certainly produces madness, and, if taken in greater quantities, causes death; but though at first stimulating, it has later a soporific or depressing effect. It grows still in some parts near Jerusalem, and more abundantly in a valley below Nazareth, at the Carmel and Tabor, and south of Hebron. The root is white, mostly forked, but straight and thick, having some resemblance to the human form; about four feet long, unwholesome, and of repulsive smell; the leaves are of a lively green, oval, about one foot long, four to five inches broad, with an undulating border; the flowers are small, whitish-green, bell-shaped, blossoming in spring, and exhaling a strong but fragrant odour; the fruit is yellow, of the size of a small egg, pleasant both to sight and smell, filled with seeds, and ripens in the month of May, in the time of the wheat harvest. It is freely eaten by the natives as wholesome, genial, and exhilarating, is believed to strengthen affection, and employed for the preparation of love-philtres.

Though daughters are not generally introduced in genealogical accounts, Dinah is mentioned, not only because she became later conspicuous in the domestic history

her womb. 23. And she conceived, and bore a son; and she said, God hath taken away my reproach: 24. And she called his name Joseph, saying, The Lord may add to me another son!

25. And when Rachel had born Joseph, Jacob said to Laban, Send me away, that I may go to my place, and to my country. 26. Give *me* my wives and my children, for whom I have served thee, and let me go: for thou knowest my service which I have served thee. 27. And Laban said to him, I pray thee, if I have found favour in thy eyes, *listen:* I have taken an augury, that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake. 28. And he said, Appoint me thy wages, and I will give *them*. 29. And he said to him, Thou knowest how I have served thee, and what thy

of Jacob (xxxiv.), but, perhaps, to enumerate *twelve* children born to the patriarch in Mesopotamia.—That Jacob had other daughters besides Dinah, is certain from later allusions.

We have before followed, with admiration, the exact ethnographic statements of Genesis, and pointed out the gradual advance of the descendants of Eber; how they migrated from the Armenian highlands into the plains of Mesopotamia, and how one branch of them from there proceeded westward beyond the Euphrates and the Jordan. But as if to enjoin again, and with still greater force, these most valuable historical facts regarding the origin of the Abrahamites, or *Hebrews*, the immediate founders of the twelve tribes are, with one exception, born in Mesopotamia, and from mothers who had never left that country; and they also journey westward, till they arrive in the land promised to Abraham. The voice of tradition could not possibly speak more distinctly, and it would be idle scepticism to doubt its veracity.

It has been observed above, that most of the Biblical names have an important and internal relation to the character and the destinies of the persons who bear them, and that they were, therefore, changed on decisive occasions (see p. 77). Such significance is evidently attributed to the names of the founders of the Hebrew tribes. On the whole, it is not difficult to discover their import. Those of the four eldest sons of Leah belong to the most remarkable appellations, expressing in the strongest and precisest manner Leah's affection and piety. The other names also are interesting; but their connection with the individuals is not equally clear, and they were partly suggested by a transitory thought, or an accidental event. Though Dan and Naphtali still point to the relation between Rachel and Leah, Gad and Asher describe quite generally joy or happiness; and though in the names of Issachar and Zebulun, the fond attachment of Leah remains faintly transparent, Joseph comprises the past and the future in almost undefined outlines. Yet all these names are much more appropriately chosen than many of those generally given to children in the East, and frequently derived from the most trifling incidents, from the words uttered by some person present at the time of the birth; from some animal which happened to pass or to be near; from the facility and speed of delivery; from the locality where it took place; and even from the weather and the temperature.

25—34. There is scarcely a passage, the moral value of which has been more

cattle hath become with me. 30. For *it was* little what thou hadst before I *came*, and it is *now* increased to a multitude; and the Lord hath blessed thee wherever I went: and now, when shall I provide for my own house also? 31. And he said, What shall I give thee? And Jacob said, Thou shalt not give me anything: if thou wilt do this thing for me, I will again feed *and* keep thy flock. 32. I will pass through all thy flock to-day, and

discussed and disputed than the conduct of Jacob towards Laban. Let us try to arrive at a calm and impartial estimate of both characters. Their relative position, at the time of the transaction, was briefly this: Jacob had been promised, by his mother, that she would send for him as soon as the abatement of Esau's enmity would permit a safe return (xxvii. 45). But fourteen years had elapsed, without his receiving any tidings from his parental house (xxxi. 41). He had passed the ninetieth year of his life and found himself still in the condition of a servant. He naturally longed to establish an independent household (ver. 30), and to acquire property of his own, which might raise his authority, and guarantee the prosperity of his increasing family. But he had, by right, nothing to demand from Laban; for he was bound, by compact, to serve him fourteen years for his two daughters; and yet, at the end of this period, he was grieved at his poverty, and desired to return to Canaan to secure his paternal inheritance. But this unfavourable state of things was partly the result of Laban's immorality. He had, by his fraud, forced Jacob to serve for two wives instead of one, to sell his strength for fourteen years instead of seven, and to sacrifice the labour of this long period which he might have employed in laying the foundation for future wealth. It is unnecessary to enquire how far Jacob *deserved* to be the victim of fraud for having committed a similar sin; for in no manner had Laban a right to assume the office of retribution. Thus, then, Laban's guilt was the first cause of the deplorable complication. Jacob seems to have submitted to this degradation as an atonement; for he acknowledged the *justice* of the contract which Laban concluded with him; but he endeavoured to obtain from his *generosity* what he could not claim by right; he induced his father-in-law to make promises in his favour; and he strove to merit his liberality by increased labour and attention beyond the conditions of the contract (xxxi. 6). But Laban so little fulfilled his promises, that even his daughters felt deeply the meanness, and broke forth into loud accusations; he had treated them, they said bitterly, like strangers; he had sold them; and had arrogated to himself their own money and property (xxxi. 15). Thus stood matters at the end of the fourteen years. What was, then, the course which duty and piety would have dictated to Jacob? He ought to have continued to regard his humiliation as an instrument of Divine correction, and to have submitted to it as a means of reconciling offended morality, and of restoring his peace of mind; he ought to have acknowledged the mercy of God, who accepted his poverty alone as a full expiation, and to have summoned sufficient calmness of judgment to see that he could not *demand generosity*, that this gracious quality of the heart necessarily operates in *spontaneous* acts, and that its absence, though a defect, is no crime, and though indispensable by the highest standard of ethics, is beyond the pale of human jurisdiction. And how did Jacob act? It appears that he withstood all temptations for the full period of fourteen years; for after the birth of Joseph he

remove from there all the speckled and spotted cattle, and all the dark cattle among the sheep, and the spotted and speckled among the goats: and *of such* shall be my hire. 33. And my righteousness shall answer for me in future time, when thou comest to my hire to inspect it: every one that *is* not speckled and spotted among the goats, and dark among the sheep, that shall be *counted* as stolen with me. 34. And Laban said, Behold, may it be according to

intended to return to his native land, taking with him nothing but his wives and children, for whom he had served (ver. 26). Laban, conquered by Jacob's moderation, was, for a moment, inclined to greater liberality. Pitying the destitution of his daughters and grand-children, and feeling that he owed the visible increase of his wealth to Jacob's industry, and to the manifest blessing attending his steps, in a generous impulse, he allowed him to choose his compensation himself, before he departed (vers. 26—39). Thus an opportunity for a hearty and permanent conciliation between Jacob and Laban was once more offered; but it was converted into an occasion of increased animosity. Neither of the two characters possessed as yet that disinterested virtue which is the first condition of friendship. But, we must pronounce it distinctly, the greater share of the guilt falls upon Jacob. He replied to Laban's request with a proposal which, on his part, was dictated by lurking deceit, but which Laban might have construed as honest modesty. When Jacob made the proposal, his mind had already formed the whole fraudulent procedure by which he acquired his wealth, while Laban, in accepting it, might have anticipated the usual beneficence of God in favour of Jacob, and His supernatural assistance. The agreement was made. Laban, careful that the conditions should be faithfully fulfilled on both sides, singled out himself all the spotted and all the coloured among the sheep, and all the speckled among the goats, entrusted them to his sons, and separated them by a three days' journey from the other animals left in Jacob's charge. But now the latter, unchecked by honesty or conscience, began to carry out his unprincipled stratagems; he heaped new and greater shame upon himself; well aware that a special Providence watched over him (ver. 30), but unable to use this goodness of God as a support and a guide, he turned it into a snare which entangled his mind; he did not blush to invoke righteousness and justice in his fraud (ver. 33), as he had before abused the name of God for a deliberate untruth (xxvii. 20). Consulting nothing but his own avarice, he appropriated to himself a very considerable part of the flocks. When Laban perceived this unwelcome fact, he thought himself free from all his promises and obligations; he was sure that his confidence had been ill-placed; he revoked his concessions; and now a true emulation of insidious deception commenced on both sides; Laban altered the stipulations repeatedly; but Jacob always found means of evading or defying them (xxxi. 8). The former was thus, for self-protection, drawn into a labyrinth of strife in which his morality necessarily went astray; he deceived and insulted Jacob, as he had been deceived and insulted by him; he "changed his wages ten times" (xxxi. 8); for, when the patriarch represented to Rachel and Leah the reprehensible conduct of Laban, they could advance no word of excuse for their father; and when he repeated it, with the same emphasis, a second time to Laban himself, the latter neither made a denial nor attempted a refutation, but tacitly acknowledged it

thy word.—35. And he removed that day the he-goats *that were* ringstraked and spotted, and all the she-goats *that were* speckled and spotted, every one that had *some* white in it, and all the dark among the sheep; and gave *them* into the hand of his sons. 36. And he set a three days' journey between himself and Jacob: and Jacob pastured the rest of Laban's flocks.—37. And Jacob took for himself fresh rods of poplar, and of the hazel, and plantain tree; and peeled white strakes in them, making the white appear which *was* in the rods. 38. And he placed the rods which he had peeled into the gutters in the watering troughs, whither the flocks came to drink, before the flocks. And they conceived when they came to drink. 39. And the flocks conceived before the rods, and

(xxxi. 41—44). Thus Laban, who had commenced with an unjust action, in due time suffered the severest penalties; he had deprived Jacob of the fruit of seven years' labour by forcing Leah upon him; and he was now deprived of a great part of his property. With regard to *him*, the ways of Providence were, therefore, justified; but the sin of Jacob was of a darker dye; the stain was the deeper as he was from the chosen seed of Abraham; he had failed to contribute to the sanctification of God, had mocked the fundamentals of moral truth, repaid a want of generosity with calmly-planned deceit, and proved that his own wisdom appeared to him better than faith;—could he be astonished that sad trials and punishments awaited him?

35—43. The nature of Jacob's fraud may thus be described. As generally the sheep are white, and the goats black (Cant. iv. 1, 2), he requested Laban to remove from the flocks all animals not possessing these normal colours, that is, the sheep either entirely black or marked with black spots, and the goats either entirely white or having white spots; and as the dark or spotted and speckled sheep, and the various-coloured goats, rare in themselves, are born in still smaller numbers, in flocks exclusively consisting of the normal animals, Jacob might almost justly say: "Thou shalt give me nothing," and Laban could readily agree. Thus Jacob remained the shepherd of far the greater part of Laban's flocks; whilst the abnormal sheep and goats, under the care of Laban's sons, were driven to such a distance as to render a meeting or intermixture of the two flocks impossible. Now Jacob, in order to pervert the ordinary course of nature, devised a means of artificially changing the colours of the new-born animals. The ancients were universally acquainted with the influence which, under certain circumstances, the sight, by the mother, of some extraordinary object, may exercise on the formation of the fœtus, whence, for instance, the Spartan women placed the pictures of heroes before themselves in the wish and hope to produce children resembling them in great qualities. Jacob took, therefore, sticks of various kinds of trees; peeled off portions of the bark in strakes or rings, so that partly the dark rind and partly the white wood might be visible; and placed them in the gutters before the wells, whither the flocks were led to drink. The sheep and goats, in their heat and eagerness, were struck with the unusual objects; and the consequence was that those which conceived gave birth

brought forth cattle ringstraked, speckled, and spotted. 40. And Jacob separated the lambs; and he set the faces of *Laban's* flocks towards *his own* ringstraked, and all *his* dark *he set* to the flocks of Laban: and he put his own flocks by themselves, and did not put them to Laban's cattle. 41. And it was whenever the stronger cattle conceived, that Jacob laid the rods before the eyes of the cattle in the gutters, that they might conceive among the rods. 42. But when the cattle were feeble, he did not put *them* in: so the feeble were Laban's, and the stronger Jacob's. 43. And the man increased exceedingly, and had much cattle, and maidservants, and manservants, and camels, and asses.

"to cattle ring-straked, speckled, and spotted." But Jacob, not satisfied with this stratagem, and wishing to carry it out more systematically, "mixed his own ring-straked cattle and dark sheep with the flocks of Laban" (ver. 40); and the consequence was that he gradually obtained normal animals also, namely, white sheep and black goats; and *this latter cattle* he separated, in distinct flocks, from those of Laban; since the abnormal sheep and goats could easily be discovered among Laban's cattle. Thus the rather obscure text finds, we believe, an intelligible explanation.—But not yet contented, Jacob added a third device equally efficient and equally cunning. As Laban would at once have detected and prevented the stratagem, if his large flocks had not increased at all in normal cattle, Jacob shrewdly abstained from applying his artifice with the rods equally upon all sheep and goats; and as he was eager to secure the young of the strong animals chiefly, he withdrew the sticks when the weak ones conceived, and left their young, being of the usual colours, to his father-in-law. This he repeated annually twice during the six years: and as Laban saw each time an increase in his own flocks, he had for a long period no ground either for suspicion or jealousy.

CHAPTER XXXI.

SUMMARY.—When Jacob, on account of his increasing property, was regarded by Laban with distrust and envy, he secretly left Mesopotamia, with all his wealth, to return to Canaan. He was urged to this step by the command of God, and executed it with the consent of his wives, who admitted the ungenerous conduct of their father towards Jacob. When they departed, Rachel, without the knowledge of her husband, furtively took with her the Teraphim of Laban. The latter, informed of Jacob's escape, pursued him, and overtook him in the district of Mount Gilead. However, warned by a vision of God, he abstained from violence; but censured severely Jacob's unworthy flight, and the theft of the Teraphim. When an artifice of Rachel rendered his search after the idol fruitless, Jacob most vehemently complained of the illiberal manner with which his conscientious and unremitting services had been requited. But on Laban's proposal a conciliation was effected, a covenant concluded and ratified by sacrifices and feasts, and as a witness of it, monuments were erected, to remind both parties of the solemn vows of friendship there exchanged.

1. And he heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, Jacob hath taken away all that *was* our father's; and of *that* which *was* our father's, he hath acquired all this wealth. 2. And Jacob saw the countenance of Laban, and, behold, it *was* not towards him as in former days. 3. And the Lord said to Jacob, Return to the land of thy fathers, and to thy native country; and I shall be with thee. 4. And Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah into the field to his flock. 5. And he said to them, I see your father's countenance, that it *is* not towards me as in

1—16. At last the astute schemes of Jacob were discovered. But in this respect also, a marked progress is traceable. After the first few births of the cattle, Laban might indeed have been surprised at the great number of abnormal sheep and goats; but he might attribute it to the interposition of God in favour of Jacob; he might regard it as a hint, how unjust, from an ordinary point of view, the compact was which he had concluded with his son-in-law; and he could not censure Jacob for that which was a silent but powerful rebuke to himself. However, though he was able to understand, he was unwilling to profit by, the lesson: had he been honest and candid, he might easily have arrived at a just arrangement; for he had not agreed to allow the abnormal cattle to Jacob *for an indefinite period*; he might, when the latter had obtained a fair and sufficient amount of property, in equity have declared the contract as fulfilled; and if but his conscience was satisfied, he might have enforced his resolution, even against the will of Jacob; for he was certainly the stronger of the two (ver. 29). But he was far from acting in such spirit. Bewildered at the extraordinary increase of Jacob's various-coloured cattle, his first impulse was to alter the contract, forgetting, that he was the cause of Jacob's poverty, and abandoning, for the gratification of his avarice, the virtuous intentions before conceived (xxx. 28). As he had neither a knowledge nor a suspicion of Jacob's fraudulent artifice, he was bound to recognize the hand of God in Jacob's blessing. Such a Divine interposition is, indeed, recorded in the text (vers. 9—12); and though, at first sight, appearing to be in total disharmony with the preceding narrative, which represents Jacob as the sole responsible agent of the stratagem, it is, in reality, a most interesting addition, forcibly illustrating both Jacob's character and his relation to God. After the patriarch had entered into an agreement prompted by the most fraudulent motives, God appeared to him in a dream; he supposed he saw that all the rams which approached the sheep, were spotted and ring-streaked; and he heard the voice of God directing his attention to the sight before him, and adding: "for I have seen all that Laban doeth to thee." What was the end of the dream? To assure Jacob of God's assistance and bounty; to convince him, that he might confidently leave the issue to His own protection; and, above all, to exhort him, not to imitate the deed of Laban, nor to repay fraud with fraud. God, knowing the deceitful propensity of Jacob's heart, and seeing that he was again bent upon an abject scheme, wished to warn and to save him—but the communication of the future events was again to him a cause of moral degradation. As the oracle received by Rebekah, concerning his spiritual birthright, had led him to deceive his aged father and to blaspheme God Himself; so the prophecy of the dream induced him to accomplish its realisation by base means; too feeble in faith to confide the matter to God, he relied entirely on his own uncontrolled shrewdness; and the mention of

former days; but the God of my father hath been with me. 6. And you know that with all my power I have served your father. 7. And your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times; but God did not suffer him to wrong me. 8. If he said thus, The speckled shall be thy wages; then all the cattle bore speckled: and if he said thus, The ringstraked shall be thy wages; then all the cattle bore ringstraked: 9. Thus God hath taken away the cattle of your father, and hath given *them* to me. 10. And it was at the time that the cattle conceived, that

Laban's injustice, so far from calling forth virtuous resolves, was construed by him as an admonition to retort and to retaliate. It is, therefore, a most serious mistake to suppose, that our text approves of Jacob's dishonest devices, or seals them with the Divine sanction: this would not be less absurd than to assert, that the prediction: "the elder son will serve the younger" (xxv. 23), implied the permission of God for the disguise and deception of Jacob with regard to the paternal blessing. The promises, perhaps intended as trials, proved to Jacob occasions for fatal temptations. The reason why the dream, which occurred at the beginning, is, in our narrative, recorded at the end of the six years, and immediately before Jacob's departure, seems to be, to let his stratagem appear in all its meanness; since, if it preceded, the imposition might be mistaken for an act authorized by God—as, indeed, Jacob mistook it. — The mutual position and conduct of Jacob and Laban were, therefore, these: God would have increased the prosperity of the former, even without his unlawful co-operation, while the latter did not acknowledge the direct will of God in that growing wealth; the one was deficient in patience and submission, the other in the belief of an all-ruling Providence; the one wished to give effect to a Divine prophecy by human means, the other recognised nothing but necessity and chance. When, therefore, Laban saw in one instance nature working against his interest, he desired to change the conditions of the stipulation. This act, though in itself arbitrary, was not seriously resisted by Jacob, because his fraud had furnished him the means of gaining on any condition, whether the dotted animals alone were to be his property, or the speckled, or the ring-straked, or the normal ones alone: it appears, indeed, that Laban tried every possible change; but still Jacob was the conqueror; he became a wealthy man, and applied his abundance of sheep and goats to the acquisition of other useful animals, and of numerous servants. Thus Laban might at last have been forced to acknowledge God's manifest government. But it appears that the third fraud of Jacob opened the eyes, first of his sons, and then of himself. The former, who were his herdsmen, saw at the end of six years, with astonishment, that their own flocks consisted mostly of weak and small, those of Jacob of strong and fine, animals. This fact, too remarkable not to arouse their suspicion, probably led to the detection of all the artifices of Jacob. Thus only they could justly say: "Jacob hath taken away all that was our father's" (ver. 1); thus only are Laban's words intelligible, which he later addressed to his son-in-law: "these cattle are my cattle, and all that thou seest is mine"; and thus only can we understand Laban's violent intentions against Jacob (ver. 29); for the flight, though denounced as "silly" (ver. 28), could not be regarded as a criminal offence.

When Jacob heard Laban's sons speak openly of his fraud, and saw Laban's mistrust expressed in his face: did his con-

I lifted up my eyes, and saw in a dream, and, behold, the rams coming upon the cattle *were* ringstraked, speckled, and dotted. 11. And the angel of God said to me in a dream, Jacob: and I said, Here I *am*. 12. And He said, Lift up now thy eyes, and see, all the rams coming upon the cattle *are* ringstraked, speckled, and dotted: for I have seen all that Laban doeth to thee. 13. I *am* the God of Beth-el, where thou hast anointed the pillar, *and* where thou hast vowed a vow to Me: now

science feel a pang, or his heart an emotion of repentance? If, indeed, such sentiments rose within him, they were quickly subdued and silenced by another vision of God, who commanded him to return to his native country, promised him His perpetual protection (ver. 3), and assured him that He to whom he had consecrated a monument and offered vows at Beth-el, would watch over him in future as He had guarded him up to that time (ver. 13; comp. xxviii. 19—22). Jacob interpreted the Divine apparition as a sanction of all his transactions; full of confidence and self-assurance, he sent for his wives, whilst he was tending his flocks in the field; accused their father in the strongest terms; and boldly complained of the frequent alteration of the contract, as if it had made the least difference in his own unlawful gain. He freely represented God as the author of all his wealth, and he mentioned Him more than once as the protector of his rights. He then, evidently for the first time, related to his wives the dream in which God had, six years before, promised him the increase of his flocks; but though, to himself, the meaning of the dream ought, even at that earlier period, to have been perfectly clear, it could scarcely convey any distinct notion to his wives, who, unacquainted with the perverse steps to which it had misguided him, and apparently in perfect ignorance of his stratagems and frauds, naturally regarded his wealth as an evident reward of his virtues. They were so entirely under their husband's influence, and their hearts had been so completely estranged from their father, that they looked upon the latter with exactly the same invidious eyes as Jacob himself, and spoke of him with severity and coldness bordering on disrespect. They urged, that they had not to expect any more portion or inheritance in their father's house — as if married daughters in the East had ever any such claim where there are sons; that they had been heartlessly sold by him, which term, however harsh it is, expresses no more than the usual Oriental custom; that they had been treated by him like strangers, whereas he later proved his true and deep affection; and that he had "quite eaten up their money," by applying the value of Jacob's services entirely to his own uses, whereas he had given a maidservant to either of them; and though generosity would have prompted him to marry them to his kinsman without compensating labour, he maintained them, with their increasing families, during seven years. So perfect was the effect of Jacob's consummate cunning, that his wives considered the vast losses of their father as a matter of congratulation and as a proud triumph, whereas, had they known the secret of their husband's dishonest schemes, they would have indignantly turned their hearts from him. From whatever side we view the subject, Jacob is blameable beyond excuse: disregarding the Divine warning, he unblushingly executed the frauds suggested by his fertile invention, and then abused the authority of God in covering or justifying them. Compared with these offences, the fault of Laban

rise, go out from this land, and return to the land of thy birth. 14. And Rachel and Leah answered, and said to him, Have we still any portion or inheritance in our father's house? 15. Are we not regarded by him as strangers? for he hath sold us, and hath also entirely eaten up our money. 16. Indeed, all the wealth which God hath taken from our father, it belongeth to us and to our children: and now, whatever God hath said to thee, do.— 17. And Jacob rose, and set his sons and his wives upon

was trifling; for it consisted principally in his unwillingness to acknowledge the increase of Jacob's property as the gift of God; but he was, on the one hand, not entirely wrong in this feeling, and it would, on the other hand, be unjust, to apply to Laban the same standard of morality as to Jacob, who was invested with a sacred mission.

But why did, after the sixth year, the Divine vision check the course of Jacob's incipient repentance? (ver. 3). Why was he not left to face still longer the displeasure of Laban and his sons, if it might lead to his internal correction? The reply to this question exhibits the wise economy of our text in the strongest light. True repentance would have induced Jacob to give up the flocks deceitfully acquired by him; but this would have been inappropriate under two important aspects. First, it would have left Laban unpunished for his fraud in forcing Leah upon Jacob; and yet it was indispensable that such retaliation should be exercised before Jacob's departure, which marked the permanent separation of Laban's house from the history of the patriarchs. And secondly, the abuse to which Jacob had turned God's promises could not destroy their efficacy; he had been destined to leave Mesopotamia laden with blessing and wealth; whence he might justly say: "God did not suffer Laban to do me wrong" (ver.7), or "God hath taken away the cattle of Laban and hath given it to me" (ver.9); but that he quitted the land laden with guilt also, was another stone in the scale of his transgressions, with which he was doomed soon to balance the scale of his misery.

17—21. It seems, that Laban had intended to allow Jacob the abnormal flocks during seven years, to indemnify him for his seven years of forced servitude. But the discovery of his deception totally altered the relative position of both; and his flight naturally destroyed the agreement. Thus we may account for his not attending the festivities of sheep-shearing, to which generally all relatives and friends were invited, and at which certainly the chief shepherd could not be forgotten. Jacob, shrewdly profiting by the absence of Laban and his sons, made unobserved the preparations of his escape. But in every step we meet with deeds proving how distant the characters introduced in this narrative still were from that faith and moral excellence which it was the end of Mosaism to enforce; and so complicated are the offences, that it requires the most undivided attention and the most unbiassed judgment, to estimate them with nicety and justice. Jacob had taught his wives to despise their father; the ill-feeling seems gradually to have become reciprocal between Laban and his daughters; for they also did not participate in the pastoral rejoicings; and Rachel finished by robbing her father. We need not to observe, that this trait is in perfect harmony with the other features of Rachel's character previously alluded to; she was passionate and envious; she relied on the powers of nature rather than the love of God; and now she considered herself more efficiently protected by the idols of her father than by

camels; 18. And he carried away all his cattle, and all his property which he had gained, the cattle of his acquisition, which he had gained in Padan-aram, to go to Isaac his father, into the land of Canaan. 19. And Laban had gone to shear his sheep: and Rachel stole the Teraphim which *belonged* to her father. 20. And Jacob deceived the heart of Laban the Aramæan, in that he did not tell him that he fled. 21. And he fled, he and all that he had; and he rose, and passed over the river, and turned his

the God of her husband (see p. 357). She stole the Teraphim, either, as has been advanced, because she wished to prevent Laban's consulting them on the direction of their flight, or to secure their guardianship for a journey apparently fraught with difficulties and dangers. The value of the precious metal of which the idol might have been made, was certainly a temptation subordinate to the superstitious motive. The example given by Jacob with regard to the worship of God, had manifestly exercised a greater influence upon Leah than upon Rachel; though both, therefore, acknowledged, in Jacob's blessing, the will and favour of God, and urged him to follow the Divine directions (ver. 16), Rachel continued to attach a high value to dumb images, and regarded herself safe only under the guardianship of her own gods.

Our knowledge concerning the shape of the Teraphim is very limited. They resembled the form of man (1 Sam. xix. 13), either consisting of the entire human body, or only of head and breast. They were made of various materials, and not unfrequently of silver, two hundred shekels of which were employed for one statue (Judg. xvii. 4). Our information is more accurate respecting the use and nature of the Teraphim. But we must distinguish between the earlier and the later history of the Hebrews. The origin of the Teraphim seems to have been in Mesopotamia or Chaldea, a supposition probable from our passage, and from a later allusion in which the Babylonian king is related to have consulted them (Ezek. xxi. 26). Although no doubt comprised among the idols which Jacob is recorded to have removed in Shechem (xxxv. 4), they long remained in favour among his descendants; and while the Hebrews were always conscious of their crime whenever they worshipped other gods, they do not seem to have regarded the adoration of the Teraphim as equally reproachful. On this point, the history of Micah is highly instructive (Judg. xvii.; xviii.). It shows clearly, that the Teraphim were considered as tutelar deities, fully compatible with the homage solely due to the Lord; that they were used, by many, as oracles, like the Urim and Thummim, or like the Ark of the Covenant; and that they were deemed sacred and lawful, if but a descendant of Aaron performed the ministerial functions: they implied a transgression of the second, not of the first commandment. Thus we account for the fact, otherwise most strange, that the prophet Hosea enumerates the Teraphim among the boons of which the disobedient Israelites would be deprived (iii. 4); he threatens them with the dissolution of national and of family life; he predicts, that princes and sacrifices will disappear, and together with them their own domestic gods, the Teraphim, who, therefore, have there a political and social rather than a religious import. The prophet does not hesitate to mention them, because they were evidently in his time still considered as the mildest and most harmless form of idolatry. But gradually, when the pure doctrines of Mosaism began to be enforced with greater rigour, the Teraphim were naturally included among the objects of religious aversion; even the

face *toward* the mount Gilead.—22. And Laban was told on the third day that Jacob was fled. 23. And he took his kinsmen with him, and pursued after him a seven days' journey; and he overtook him in the mount Gilead. 24. And God came to Laban the Aramæan in a dream by night, and said to him, Take heed that thou do not speak to Jacob either good or bad. 25. And Laban reached Jacob: and Jacob had pitched his tent in the mount: and Laban with his kinsmen pitched in the mount of

author of the Book of Judges, who wrote in the latest times of the monarchy (xviii. 30), inserted in his truthful narrative a remark of disapproval: "in those days there was no king in Israel, every one did what was right in his own eyes" (xvii. 6); when king Josiah established the strict worship of monotheism, he destroyed, among the other idols, the Teraphim also (2 Ki. xiii. 24); and, perhaps, exactly because they were considered as almost innocent images, the later writers were extremely severe in denouncing them: the crime of obstinacy against the Divine will is compared to the idolatry of the Teraphim (1 Sam. xv. 23); they are classed among the "detestations and abominations" (2 Kings xiii. 24); their oracles are described not only as falsehood, but as wickedness; they lead astray those who consult them like sheep which have no shepherd (Zech. x. 2); and they are attributed to the Babylonian monarch together with his other absurd modes of divination, as the auguries taken from "looking in the liver" (Ezek. xxi. 26, 28).—These remarks will suffice to explain the motives of Rachel in stealing the Teraphim, and the eagerness of Laban for recovering them (comp. Judg. xviii. 24).

As the southern part of Palestine was the goal of Jacob's journey, he crossed the Euphrates, and took then a south-western direction, till he reached the "mountain of Gilead" (ver. 21). This range extends from south to north; commencing in the north of the river Arnon, perhaps near the district of Heshbon, it proceeds northward, to the province of Bashan, probably to the vicinity of the river Hieromax or Yarmuk; and eastward, to Hauran (Auranitis); it traverses, therefore, the territory of Reuben, Gad, and the southern part of Manasseh. The sides of the mountain are covered with excellent flocks and the richest pastures. The *land* and the *town* of Gilead will be noticed in their due places.

22—30. Laban learning the flight of Jacob on the third day, appears to have set out in pursuit of him on the fourth; and since, unencumbered as he was, he could proceed at a quicker rate, he overtook him on the seventh. He was in a high state of excitement and exasperation; he felt vehement indignation at the double wrong, the clandestine escape and the theft of his gods; for the first time, the superiority of his strength suggested to him measures of violence against his astute son-in-law; he was longing to satisfy his wrath—but in the night before he arrived at the mountain of Gilead, God appeared to him in a dream and solemnly warned him. Awed by this supernatural admonition, he once more looked upon Jacob with respect and reverence. However, his anger was silenced but not conquered, checked but not appeased, and though freed from the virulence to injure by rash deeds, it was still sufficiently strong to sting by words. A most animated scene of recrimination, invectives, and upbraiding ensued. Laban, meeting his son-in-law near their respective encampments, at once gave vent to his passion in an impetuous address, in which, it must be confessed, the right appears all on his

Gilead. 26. And Laban said to Jacob, What hast thou done, that thou hast deceived my heart, and carried away my daughters, as captives *taken* with the sword? 27. Wherefore didst thou flee secretly, and deceive me, and didst not tell me, that I might have sent thee away with mirth, and with songs, with timbrel, and with harp? 28. And hast not suffered me to kiss my sons and my daughters? Thou hast now acted foolishly. 29. It is in the power of my hand to do you injury: but the God of your father spoke to me yesternight, saying, Take heed that thou do not speak to Jacob, either good or bad. 30. And now, thou didst go and depart, because thou hadst indeed a strong longing after thy father's house: *yet* wherefore hast thou stolen my gods?—31. And Jacob answered, and said to Laban, Indeed I was afraid; for I said, Perhaps thou wouldst take by force thy daughters from me. 32. With whomsoever thou findest thy gods, let him not live: before our kindred search what *is* with me, and

side. Nobody has denied that it is pervaded by a certain generosity of feeling. But those who are determined to represent Laban's character as absolutely base, say simply, all this is mere hypocrisy; he felt nothing whatever of all he uttered. But where does the text offer the least allusion that it wishes to have this construction given to his words? Does it not, on the contrary, even anticipate a significant term of rebuke employed by Laban: "And Jacob stole the heart of Laban" (vers. 20, 26)? And could a gentle conduct be expected towards the man who, defrauding him of his wealth, escaped without a reconciliation or a compromise?

31—42. Jacob replied in an able and powerful speech. But not even then, when his conscience was assailed from so many sides, and when he ought to have felt humbled rather than excited, did his usual cunning forsake him. With astonishing dexterity he entirely shifted the ground of the dispute; for, feeling himself innocent in one single point, the theft of the Teraphim, he threw upon that point alone the chief stress. To the first accusation, the treacherous flight, upon which Laban dwelt with such force and passion, he answered with a few words, almost incoherent, and certainly very feeble: "I was afraid; for I thought, perhaps thou wouldst take by force thy daughters from me" (ver. 31). Then abruptly passing to the other subject, he demanded a scrutinising and open examination, and permitted Laban to punish the offender with death. The search, fruitless in the tents of Jacob, Leah, and the two maid-servants, was concluded in the tent of Rachel. In faithful consistency with the character before assigned to her, covering theft by subtlety and untruth, she feigned a disorder which rendered her impure, forbade the father to approach her, and during which it would have been the height of impiety to sit on the holy image of the deity (comp. Lev. xv. 19—24). But when the stolen statue was not found, Jacob, summoning his whole energy of speech, poured out upon Laban his indignation and wrath; he had gained a triumph, and was resolved to turn it to the greatest possible advan-

take *it* to thee. (For Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them.)—33. And Laban went into the tent of Jacob, and into the tent of Leah, and into the tent of the two maidservants, but he did not find *them*. And he went from Leah's tent, and entered into Rachel's tent. 34. And Rachel had taken the Teraphim, and put them into the litter of the camel, and sat upon them. And Laban searched all the tent, but he did not find *them*. 35. And she said to her father, Let it not displease my lord that I cannot rise before thee; for the manner of women *is* upon me. And he searched, but did not find the Teraphim. 36. And Jacob was angry, and quarrelled with Laban: and Jacob answered and said to Laban, What *is* my trespass? what *is* my sin, that thou hast pursued after me? 37. That thou hast searched all my utensils? what hast thou found of all the utensils of thy house? put *it* here before my kindred and thy kindred, that they may judge between us two. 38. These twenty years I *have*

tage; it is impossible not to acknowledge in the first part of his words a certain verbosity, and in the latter part a certain self-glorification. Representing himself as perfectly guiltless, he threw the whole weight of the opprobrium upon his father-in-law. He was misled into this haughty assurance by two circumstances, the forbearance of Laban and the intercession of God: for the former had made no allusion whatever to the frauds by which he had appropriated to himself the flocks; and God had, by the vision of Laban in the preceding night, proved His protecting care for his welfare (ver. 42). He persuaded himself that his deceptions were *approved* by God, as he had imagined before that they were *suggested* by Him (see p. 366). Elated by this fancied innocence, he praised, in emphatic terms, his vigilance, his unwearied anxiety for Laban's flocks, his patient endurance of all hardships in the field, and of all the vicissitudes of the atmosphere; he, further, pointed to the assistance of God which never forsook him; during the whole period of twenty years his sheep and goats had been fruitful; and he was so certain that no animals had either been torn, stolen, or lost, that he even then declared his readiness to restore them; but with greater power still, he charged Laban with having arbitrarily altered his hire many times; and concluded that it was to God alone, who had yesterday given witness for him, that he owed the reward for all his toils and troubles.—Praise was, indeed, due to him for his untiring industry; but as regards the tenfold change of the hire, the fault was both in him and in Laban, and his was by far the greater guilt.

Rachel was in her tent, sitting in the "litter of the camel." For the greater comfort of ladies or children performing long journeys on camels, a kind of couch or large chair is fastened on the saddle of the animal, and often one on each side; and in order to secure protection against wind, rain, and the rays of the sun, the couch is appropriately overhung with curtains, so that it is not unlike a curtain-bed, while Arabic writers compare it to a house or a palm-tree; the

been with thee; thy ewes and thy she-goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flock I have not eaten. 39. That which was torn *by beasts* I did not bring to thee; I will bear the loss of it, of my hand mayest thou require it, *whether* stolen by day, or stolen by night. 40. *Thus* I was; in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from my eyes. 41. I have been these twenty years in thy house; I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattle: and thou hast changed my wages ten times. 42. Had not the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, been with me, indeed thou wouldst now have sent me away empty. God hath seen my affliction and the labour of my hands, and re-

light is let in by openings at the side; and as it is very commodious for reposing, it is not unfrequently used in the tents at times of encampment. The couch itself is generally made of wicker-work, and has, therefore, the appearance of a basket or a cradle. Here Rachel could conveniently conceal the Teraphim, and, as she pretended illness, her resting on it roused no suspicion. — If an animal of the flocks or herds was torn by a wild beast, the shepherd was generally obliged to bring to his master a part or member of it, to verify the fact; if he neglected to do so, he was responsible for the loss. Jacob alludes to this custom in the words: "that which was torn I brought not to thee."—The great and sudden change of temperature which at sunset takes place in many countries of the East during a great part of the year, is most severely felt by those who are obliged to pass the night in the open air, by travellers, watchmen, and shepherds. While the days are oppressively warm, and often little shelter is afforded against the scorching rays of the sun, the nights are moist with the abundant dew, or cold and dreary. It requires a strong organization and an undaunted power of endurance to stand the effects of these abrupt changes; and Jacob might, therefore, exclaim with a pardonable complacency: "in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night."

43. When Jacob's angry recriminations seemed to render a friendly settlement impossible, it was effected by Laban's unexpected moderation. The appeal to the vision which appeared to confirm, that the wealth of Jacob was the immediate gift and blessing of God; the allusion to his own repeated tergiversations; the remembrance of Jacob's hardships and faithful services: all this made an irresistible impression upon him. He was certainly aware, that by human right he could claim all the flocks of Jacob (ver. 43); but, abandoning the ordinary standard of justice, and deciding in accordance with the higher right based upon the Divine mercy, he spontaneously ceded all to his son-in-law: "what can I do this day to these my daughters, or to their children whom they have born?" was his pathetic reply. Who, then, is the nobler, the more virtuous of the two? Who is the conqueror in this struggle? Jacob, callous and more hardened by every new beneficence of God; or Laban, moved and reformed by the harsh rebuke of his deceiver? But it will be asked with astonishment: Was this contrast so unfavourable to Jacob in the author's plan and intention? We reply, that we should despair of the morality of the whole Book

buked *thee* yesternight.—43. And Laban answered and said to Jacob, The daughters *are* my daughters, and the children *are* my children, and the cattle *are* my cattle, and all that thou seest *is* mine: and what can I do this day to these my daughters, or to their children, whom they have born? 44. And now come, let us make a covenant, I and thou; and let it be for a witness between me and thee. 45. And Jacob took a stone, and set it up *for* a pillar. 46. And Jacob said to his kindred, Gather stones; and they took stones, and made a pile: and they ate there upon the pile. 47. And Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha [Pile of Witness]: and Jacob called it Gal-ed [Pile of Witness]. 48. And Laban said, This pile *is* a witness between me and thee this day:

of Genesis, were we not convinced that the author despised the artful practices of Jacob as deeply as every unsophisticated reader has done in all ages; that he denounces them as plainly as he condemns Jacob's machinations to secure the paternal blessing (xxvii. 35, 36), since both deeds belong to the same order; that deceit and dishonesty in the common transactions of life were regarded with abomination in the writings of the Hebrews; that we are, therefore, entitled to pursue Jacob's offences in all their consequences of moral complication and external punishment, as we have hitherto attempted to do. It is in the design of the text to show, that though Laban was capable of forgiveness and generosity, he remained an idolator; that, therefore, even if his conduct were irreproachable, its excellence could not be guaranteed, because it grew from a sickly root, and flowed from a poisoned source; but that Jacob, though misunderstanding God, never wavered in believing in Him; and that although, therefore, his individual acts were still degraded by cunning and insincerity, there lived within him a faith and a conviction which, like a purifying fire, would necessarily free his mind from all debasing alloy. The Biblical writers, by fully acknowledging the merits of heathens, and truthfully according to them their due praise, show, that they sincerely fostered the beautiful hope of a future unity of all nations under the wings of a universal faith; a hope which in itself proves, that they believed all mankind capable of the highest moral impulses.

44—54. Laban, desirous to strengthen and to cement the reconciliation, proposed the conclusion of a covenant as a perpetual witness between him and Jacob. It is scarcely possible to doubt, that an important historical fact is concealed in this part of the narrative; the monument erected was consecrated by sacrifices and convivial repasts (vers. 46, 54); it received both a Hebrew name from Jacob, and a Chaldee appellation from Laban (ver. 47); it was placed under the protection both of the God of Abraham, and of the gods of Nahor (ver. 53); Jacob swore by the fear of his father Isaac, and Laban by the gods of his fathers (ver. 53); the former was pledged never to pass with hostile intentions beyond that place towards Chaldea, and the latter never towards Canaan (ver. 52); God Himself was invoked as witness and avenger, if Jacob should ill-treat or grieve Laban's daughters (ver. 50); and the place where the covenant was concluded, was called Mizpah, because Laban said, "may the Lord watch be-

therefore was its name called Galed; 49. And Mizpah *is a witness,* for he said, May the Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another. 50. If thou dost ill-treat my daughters, or if thou dost take *other* wives besides my daughters, no man *is* with us, see God *is* witness between me and thee. 51. And Laban said to Jacob, Behold this pile, and behold *this* pillar, which I have erected between me and thee. 52. This pile *is* witness, and *this* pillar *is* witness, that I will not pass over this pile to thee, and that thou shalt not pass over this pile and this pillar to me, for evil. 53. The God of Abraham, and the gods of Nahor, may judge between us; the gods of their father. And Jacob swore by the fear of his father Isaac. 54. And Jacob offered sacrifice upon the mountain; and called his kindred to eat bread: and they ate bread, and remained over night on the mountain.

tween me and thee, when we are absent one from another" (ver. 49). It is, therefore, most probable that, during a certain period of Hebrew history, Mizpah in the mountain of Gilead formed the boundary between the territory of the Aramæans and that of the Hebrews; that that town, though marking the political separation of both nations, was ardently wished to form a social link between them; that it was intended to recall to both their common origin and descent, and thus to restrain them from inimical invasions: a warning which involved not only the national prosperity, but the very political existence of the Israelites.—Mizpah was situated in the district of Gilead; it became later celebrated not only by the exploits and domestic calamity of Jephthah, who there resided, but still more by the sanctuary of God there erected. The latter circumstance alone is significant enough to account for the conspicuous introduction of Mizpah in the history of the patriarchs. But it is not improbable that Mizpah is identical with "Ramoth in Gilead," which is also called "Ramath Hammizpeh," belonging to the tribe of Dan. This was a Levitical town and a city of refuge, and thus in a double sense bore a holy character; but under the reign of Solomon it obtained political importance also, as it became one of the centres of internal administration; and though later taken by the Syrians, in whose hands it remained in spite of the determined efforts of the kings of Israel, it was at last restored to the sceptre of the latter. If really Mizpah is the same town as Ramath Hammizpeh, the narrative of our text assumes a still more emphatic meaning; and *Galed* would then be synonymous with *Ramoth.*—Stones, usually oblong blocks with round heads, are still frequently raised in eastern lands as memorials of great events; they give the names to many villages; and the erection of a stone, called "the witness," marks the conclusion of peace between belligerents.

CHAPTERS XXXII., XXXIII.

SUMMARY.—Laban returned to Haran; whilst Jacob, proceeding from Mizpah towards Shechem, was met by a host of angels, and called the place where he saw them Mahanaim (xxxii. 1—3). He then sent messengers to his brother, to inform him of his return and his wealth (vers. 4—6). But when he heard that Esau advanced towards him with four hundred men, he was overwhelmed with fear; and in order to avert or to mitigate the dangers he anticipated, he arranged his property so that at least one half might be saved; sought the assistance of God by a fervent and humble prayer; and endeavoured to propitiate his brother by a very liberal present of cattle (ver. 7—22). In the night he crossed the river Jabbok; and an extraordinary encounter occasioned the change of his name from Jacob into Israel, to indicate that he had conquered God and men; and gave rise to the custom of the Israelites, not to eat the *nervus ischiadicus* of animals.—Esau approached, and seeing his brother, welcomed him with the most affectionate cordiality; accepted the present prepared for him only after repeated solicitations; and proposed to accompany Jacob to the place where he intended to take up his abode, or at least to send with him some of his men for protection: but Jacob, unable entirely to banish his apprehensions, declined the offer, and continued his way to Succoth, while Esau returned to the region of Mount Seir (xxxiii. 1—17). The patriarch proceeded, and arrived safely near Shechem, encamped before the town, and on a piece of ground purchased from the sons of Hamor, he erected an altar, and invoked the Lord in prayer (vers. 18—20).

1. And Laban rose early in the morning, and kissed his sons and his daughters, and blessed them: and Laban departed, and returned to his place. 2. And Jacob went on his way, and angels of God met him. 3. And when Jacob saw them, he said, This *is* the camp of God: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim [Double

1—3. From the town marking the eastern boundary of the promised land, and later distinguished by peculiar religious and political importance, Jacob proceeded in a south-westerly direction towards the future centre of the Hebrew commonwealth. The soil on which he then trod was destined to contain both the palace of the Hebrew kings and the temple of the Hebrew God; and, though the inheritance of the tribes of Israel, it was the gift of the Lord. This double fact is represented by the angels of God meeting Jacob after his separation from Laban. Their appearance reminded him that his descendants would be required to combat for the land of Canaan; but that God, if not fighting *for* them, would certainly fight *with* them; and that their own army would be strengthened and encouraged by an invisible host from above; or that their own camp would be joined and inspired by a camp of angels. —He, therefore, at once hallowed by purer thoughts and raised to nobler sentiments, called the name of the place Mahanaim, or the *two camps*. Mahanaim was situated south-west of Mizpah, in Gilead, in the north of the Jabbok (ver. 23). It belonged to the territory of Gad, though it lay on the boundary line between Gad and Manasseh. It derived its chief interest from the fact that it was one of the Levitical towns, which sanctity is here foreshadowed by the vision of the angels. It was later the residence of Ish-bosheth during his short and unhappy reign over Israel; the refuge of David when he fled before Absalom; and received, under Solomon, a certain administrative importance.

4—6. We have hitherto pointed out the most perfect consistency in the deli-

Camp].—4. And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother, to the land Seir, the country of Edom. 5. And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall you say to my lord Esau; Thus saith thy servant Jacob, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed *there* until now: 6. And I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and menservants, and womenservants: and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy eyes.—7. And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau; and he cometh also to meet thee, and four hundred men with him. 8. And Jacob was greatly afraid and dis-

neation of Jacob's character, and the strictest connection between all parts of his history; his fluctuations and failings; his relation to Esau and to Laban; the nice balance between *guilt* and *compensation*, manifesting the just rule of Providence. The succeeding narrative admirably continues the patriarch's history with regard to the two chief points alluded to, and exhibits the further development of his character, and the ultimate retribution for his transgressions; and it does far more than vaguely show how God protects His favourites, and turns every danger to their advantage. Let us calmly follow the text.

From Mizpah in the district of Gilead Jacob sent messengers to his brother Esau, to the land of Seir, to announce to him his return from Mesopotamia. What was the motive of this step? It is impossible to suppose that it was suggested by Jacob's apprehension of a plundering attack of the rapacious Edomites. The message would have occasioned rather than removed that danger: it would have acquainted the lawless robbers with what otherwise might have escaped their notice; for there is a considerable distance between Mizpah and the central abodes of the Idumæans; and it would have been an imprudence, quite at variance with the usual shrewdness of Jacob, to tempt their avarice by informing them that "he had oxen, and asses, flocks, and menservants, and maidservants." The progress of the story renders it obvious, that Jacob began to feel more deeply the wrong which he had done his brother, of which he had, from the beginning, never been insensible, and which he implicitly acknowledged by his flight to Mesopotamia. When he surveyed the past, he found at every step the mercy and favour of God; he had become a rich emir; Laban had been warned not to touch him; and a host of angels had but just indicated future and greater benefits. His heart could not be so hardened as not to be reminded of his faults, or to be impressed with a feeling of his unworthiness. The first effect of awakening conscience is fear; the next, humiliation and contrition. Jacob began with feeling the first, but soon advanced to the other and nobler stages. He knew the generous qualities of his brother's heart, on which Rebekah had confidently relied (xxvii. 45); he hoped that the interval of twenty years would have cooled down his anger, if it had not entirely effaced from his mind the memory of past injuries. But as prudence demanded that he should seek certainty, he sent some of his men with a message, in which some degree of apprehension was designedly not concealed, and which breathed unaffected humility; which, by alluding to his protracted sojourn in a foreign land, and under a strange roof, appealed to feelings of home and early youth; and which, with natural but pathetic anxiety, prayed for a conciliatory reply from the offended brother.

tressed: and he divided the people that *was* with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two camps; 9. And said, If Esau cometh to the one camp, and smiteth it, then the other camp which is left may escape. 10. And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac! O Lord who saidst to me, Return to thy country, and to the land of thy birth, and I will do well to thee: 11. I am too little for all the mercies, and for all the truth, which Thou hast shown to Thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I have become two camps. 12. Deliver me, I pray Thee, from

7—13. Esau had, in the mean time, grown into a mighty chief; the blessing of his father had begun to be realised; and he was strong by his valour and the terror of his sword (xxvii. 40). The messengers arrived at Seir; Esau heard their commission — and, without a word of reply, suddenly marched out with four hundred warriors towards Jacob. What were his intentions? How was his haste to be interpreted? Were his old wounds at once re-opened? and did he burn, at last, to take sanguinary revenge? The messengers, perceiving his sudden impetuosity, were seized with consternation. In breathless quickness they returned to their master, and informed him of the strong impression produced upon Esau by the mention of his name, and of his approach, accompanied by a formidable army. What else could Jacob suppose, but that his brother's mind was bent upon bloodshed and destruction? His excited imagination saw his wives and children murdered (ver. 12), his ill-gotten flocks destroyed, and himself struck by the fatal blow, or chained in ignominious fetters: agony and fear overpowered him;—*but that agony was his atonement; it was a suffering commensurate with his guilt; it was at once his retribution and his justification.* But though it was a torture to his heart, it did not unbend his energy; all his faculties, feelings, and affections, were roused to their utmost power, and his whole nature was quickened into vigorous activity. His first impulse, after receiving the disastrous news, was a measure of precaution; his second was prayer. That the latter did not occur to him as the first emotion, was a remnant of his weakness, and in admirable harmony with his character. Adopting an arrangement frequently resorted to in cases of sudden attack, he divided his people and his flocks into two parts or "camps," to save at least one by flight, whilst the other encountered the enemy. But his prayer is as powerful as it is significant; it indicates unmistakeably that internal change of Jacob's mind to which we have alluded; it is the bridge which leads from Jacob the worldly schemer, to Jacob the pious believer. It is entirely woven out of the elements of that faith, of which he had hitherto proved himself but little capable, and the want of which had caused all his moral aberrations. This prayer, in which reliance is placed, not in human strength or merit, but solely in Divine assurances and Divine mercy, is the negation of all natural claims; and while acknowledging the unworthiness of the afflicted man, it cheers and encourages him by the infinite love and truth of God. In this supplication breathes the soul of Abraham, whose purity and humility we recognise. At last, the grandson had, for a moment at least, felt the flame of faith in all its celestial glow; misfortune, experience, and internal struggles, had, by a long circuit, brought him to the piety which seemed innate in Abraham.

the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, the mother with the children. 13. And Thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.—14. And he stayed there that night, and took of that which came to his hand a present for Esau his brother; 15. Two hundred she-goats, and twenty he-goats, two hundred ewes, and twenty rams, 16. Thirty milch camels with their young, forty cows, and ten bulls, twenty she-asses, and ten foals. 17. And he gave *them* into the hand of his servants, every drove by itself; and said to his servants, Pass over before me, and put a space between drove and drove. 18. And he commanded the foremost, saying, When Esau my brother meeteth thee, and asketh thee, saying, Whose *art* thou? and whither dost thou go? and whose *are* these

But while faith was, in the latter, a simple obedience; it was, in Jacob, an acquired and self-chosen virtue; and in this respect the character of Jacob exhibits a higher phase of development; Abraham and Jacob are like unstained childhood and conquering manhood; like unbroken tranquillity and peace through war and victory; if the former is the happier, the latter is the more imposing condition; if the one requires a more harmonious mind, the other decidedly demands a stronger will.

14—21. Jacob, desirous to free himself at once from the double offence, that which he had committed against Esau and against Laban, resigned himself to lose half of the flocks so ignobly acquired (vers. 8, 9), and selected, as a present for his brother, 550 head of cattle, forming, as it were, *an expiatory offering*, and sealing the contrition of the heart with an act of self-denial and repentance. We admit that this idea is implied rather than expressed in the text; but it is required by the principle of justice everywhere manifest in the narrative, and indispensable for the moral regeneration of Jacob. However, the *immediate* end of the gift was to reconcile Esau. Though Jacob had just, in a most fervent prayer, placed himself entirely under the merciful protection of God, he did not neglect to prepare all in his power that might possibly avert the danger. How completely he preserved his self-possession, is made evident by the nature of the present; for the proportion of the male and female animals fixed by him is in exact accordance with that shown by experience to be necessary for their breeding, and with that stated by ancient authorities. As the milk of camels is peculiarly refreshing and wholesome, milch-camels were doubly valuable.—Jacob, entrusting the different species of animals to different servants, ordered them to follow one another in certain intervals. The reason of this arrangement is obvious. It is not only because, by such separation, the present appeared much more considerable; but the oftener Esau heard the same humble reply, "This cattle belongs to thy servant Jacob, and it is a present sent to my lord Esau," the more his anger was likely to be assuaged. Jacob, further, repeatedly enjoined upon the servants not to forget to add, that he himself was following (vers. 19, 20); for he thought that this would convince Esau that he went

before thee? 19. Then thou shalt say, *They are* thy servant Jacob's; it *is* a present sent to my lord Esau: and, behold, he *is* also behind us. 20. And so he commanded the second, and the third, and all that followed the droves, saying, In this manner you shall speak to Esau, when you find him. 21. And say, Behold, also, thy servant Jacob *is* behind us. For he said, I will appease him with the present that goeth before me, and afterwards I will see his face; perhaps he will accept me.— 22. And the present passed over before him: and he himself stayed that night in the camp. 23. And he rose in that night, and took his two wives, and his two women-servants, and his eleven sons, and passed over the ford of the Jabbok. 24. And he took them, and brought them over the brook, and brought over that which he had.— 25. And Jacob was left alone: and there wrestled a man

to meet him with complete confidence, and without apprehension. Jacob might, however, send the gift, without rousing in Esau the suspicion of any special motive, as it is a prevailing custom in the East, not to pay visits, especially after a long separation, or to influential persons, without offering some present. To refuse it, is considered as an insult, or as a desire to break off the friendship, or, if done by superiors in rank, as a sign of disgrace.

22—24. But Jacob did not idly wait for Esau's arrival; from Mahanaim he continued his regular route in a south-western direction; and as, in the summer months, the days are too warm in Palestine to allow of travelling, he advanced in the night; but, in order always to be prepared for Esau's approach, he sent the men with the presents before him; and in a later part of the night he followed with his wives, his children, and his flocks. He crossed the Jabbok. This river, at present called Wady Serka, or the *blue river*, comes from the mountains of Bashan, between Rabbath-ammon (Philadelphia) and Gerasa; and after a course from west to east, through a deep valley, abundantly covered with reeds, it discharges itself into the Jordan, opposite Shechem, at a point almost equidistant from the lake of Tiberias and the Dead Sea. It was originally the northern, and after the conquests of the Hebrews, the south-western boundary of the land of the Ammonites, as it still marks the frontier between the provinces of Moerad and El-Belka.

25—33. In the affliction of his heart, Jacob sought retirement and solitude. The next dawn might fearfully close his life. Serious and busy thoughts crowded upon him. The past was stained with sin and deceit. Remorse preyed upon his conscience. He had conquered men; he had gained inglorious victories over Isaac, and Esau, and Laban; but could he "conquer God," who delights in purity of the heart, and abominates guile? He was sincere in his repentance; he made solemn vows, and formed earnest resolutions of virtue; and he strengthened these sentiments by grave meditations in the loneliness of the night. He thereby reconciled God, who is ever ready to accept true repentance. In spite of his former transgressions, he now secured for himself and his descendants the Divine protection; he "conquered God," as he had conquered men. But though sins are pardoned, they cannot remain

with him until the rising of the morning dawn. 26. And when He saw that He did not prevail against him, He touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was brought out of joint as He wrestled with him. 27. And He said, Let me go, for the morning dawn riseth. And he said, I will not let Thee go, unless Thou bless me. 28. And He said to him, What *is* thy name? And he said, Jacob. 29. And He said, Thy name shall no more

entirely unpunished; man is not only a child of God, but a link in the social chain; his *heart* belongs to God and is weighed in heaven, but his *deeds* are judged on earth; every transgression disturbs the equilibrium of the social fabric, which can be restored only by the counterpoise of punishment. This unavoidable Nemesis of guilt, which no philosophy or religious system can with safety overthrow, is strictly carried out in the Scriptures. Though, therefore, Jacob had effected a thorough reconciliation with God and had purified his mind, his unjust deeds could not remain unvisited; he was doomed to suffer for them *through his children*; and thus to pay his debt to Providence. His next child, Benjamin, cost him the life of his beloved Rachel; he saw his eldest son commit an infamous crime; he reaped grief and disgrace from Dinah; he witnessed the violent deeds of Simeon and Levi; he was mortified by the ignominy of Judah and Tamar; and his anxieties and cares connected with the history of Joseph threatened to bring him with sorrow into the grave. This two-fold idea, we believe to be embodied in the marvellous occurrence here narrated. In that lonely night of remorse and penitence, Jacob wrestled with God, and he prevailed; he obtained forgiveness; his past life was to be so entirely forgotten, that, with a significance to which we are accustomed, his name was changed from *Jacob* into *Israel*; but yet he did not come out of that struggle without an external suffering; his thigh was injured and displaced, and he halted. Now, the thigh represented the power of generation (xxiv. 2); and children are more than once described as "those who come forth from the thigh" (xlvi. 26; Exod. i. 5; Judg. viii. 30). This is the *spirit* of the tale; all the rest is its *form*. We shall not be surprised, therefore, to find, as in the Creation, the Fall, the Deluge, and other portions, analogous narratives in the religious books of other ancient nations; we shall be able to understand the belief of the Hindoos, that the spirits undertake their earthly combats in the mysterious hours of the night, but retire at the approaching morning-dawn (ver. 27); or the Greek fiction that Jupiter wrestled with Hercules, but, unable to conquer him, was at last compelled to desist from the combat. Such strange myths were current among most eastern nations; they were known, and perhaps popular, among the Hebrews. The tradition, here narrated, seems especially to have taken deep root among them; it gave rise to the custom of abstaining from a certain sinew in the thigh of animals (ver. 33); but we see in our tale nothing of a struggle undertaken against a giant, or an evil demon, or any other being arrogating to itself power in opposition to the Divine omnipotence. In order to divest the legend of its superstitious elements, to bring it into harmony with the purer notions of Mosaism, and to endow it with a new and instructive meaning, the text uses it to symbolise a deeply interesting crisis in the life of the patriarch, and to show the reformation of his mind and the retribution which awaited him. Or is any one, indeed, seriously disposed to under-

be called Jacob, but Israel: for thou hast obtained the mastery with God and with men, and hast prevailed. 30. And Jacob asked *Him*, and said, Tell *me*, I pray Thee, Thy name. And He said, Wherefore dost thou ask after My name? And He blessed him there. 31. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel [Face of God]: for, *said he*, I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. 32. And as he passed over Penuel, the sun shone upon him, and

stand this occurrence literally? "A man" comes to Jacob and wrestles with him in the night (ver. 25). This man is *God* (vers. 29, 31). But God cannot subdue his human antagonist (ver. 26); and He is compelled to have recourse to a petty artifice; He dislocates his thigh, and makes him lame (vers. 26, 32); but He yet remains entirely in the man's power (ver. 27); and is at last obliged to acknowledge Himself conquered (ver. 29). How can these crude views be reconciled with the refined Biblical notions of the incorporeality of God? Or do the Biblical writings, like incoherent fragments, overthrow in one place what they teach in another as a fundamental doctrine? We have had many opportunities of proving that the thread which leads safely through the labyrinth of general eastern or ancient traditions, historical reminiscences, and mythical reflections, many of which found their way into the mental life of the Hebrews also, is the pure and uncompromising notion of God as Creator and Ruler of the Universe, of His unchangeable attributes as Judge and ever-watchful Providence. Interpretations, overlooking this principle, confound the letter of the narrative with the spirit; the garment with the idea which it embodies; the vehicle with the truth which it conveys. It is impossible to understand the wrestling of Jacob as a dream, which is against the tenour of the whole portion (comp. vers. 24, 25), or a "struggling in prayer"; nor was the angel sent by God to console and to encourage him; neither was he an assassin hired by Esau (!): all these opinions are not less preposterous than the proposition to take the angels of Mahanaim as a number of travellers who informed Jacob of an approaching enemy. It is, in conclusion, important to observe, that when Jacob asked God to bless him (ver. 27), his request was granted *by the change of his name* (vers. 27, 29). It is, therefore, evident that the alteration of "Jacob" into "Israel" was regarded as a great and peculiar blessing. The import of the two names is, indeed, widely different; while Jacob means the *second*, Israel implies the *first* (see p. 323); while the former may be understood as the *deceiver* (xxvii. 36), the latter denotes the *conqueror:* the victory which he had formerly gained over man was now sanctioned and ratified by the victory obtained over God; the birthright, which he had before coveted by unlawful means was now granted to him, as the gift of God; his sins were covered and forgiven, and he began a new life of hope and promise.—Israel became, therefore, henceforth his holy or theocratical name; and the term "children of Israel" is almost invariably used to denote the chosen nation or the people of God; in this sense, Jacob is but rarely employed in poetical parallelism. The *Israelites* are the warriors destined, like their ancestor, to conquer men, and to obtain, by their piety, the blessing of God. But in all worldly relations, the patriarch is, as hitherto, called Jacob, as a reminiscence of the struggles to which his character and mission exposed him, but which, at last, purified and redeemed his nature.

The place where the event happened, is Peniel or Penuel. It must have been situated in the *south* of the Jabbok (vers.

he halted upon his thigh. 33. Therefore the children of Israel do not eat *of* the sinew of the hip, which *is* upon the hollow of the thigh, to this day: because He touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in the sinew of the hip.

23, 24); for it is improbable that Jacob, after having brought over the river his wives, his children, and all his property, should have returned, in order to pass the night alone in Mahanaim; we find him the following morning, when the sun had risen above the horizon, *passing* by Peniel (ver. 32), continuing his way towards the Jordan, and in the midst of his family (xxxiii. 1). It lay further south or south-west of Mahanaim; north-east of Succoth, which was also situated on the east-side of the Jordan. It was, from early times, fortified by a tower or castle; but Gideon destroyed the latter, and massacred many of the inhabitants, to punish their insulting conduct. By this misfortune, the town was materially weakened, till Jeroboam, appreciating the advantages of its natural position, enlarged and again fortified it.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

1. And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men. And he divided the children to Leah, and to Rachel, and to the two handmaids. 2. And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children behind, and Rachel and Joseph behind. 3. And he passed over before them, and prostrated himself to the ground seven

1—3. Prepared for every emergency, Jacob continued his journey. Though strengthened by faith and prayer, he had omitted nothing that prudence could devise. But cowardice had no share in his arrangements. Though naturally wishing to avoid a sanguinary encounter with his brother, he took a position which exposed his own person to the greatest danger. With calm judgment, he placed his wives and children in such manner, that those dearest to him followed last, and were, therefore, most protected; first, the hand-maids with their children; then, Leah with her offspring; and last, Rachel and Joseph; but he himself headed the caravan; and when he saw Esau at a distance, he advanced towards him, awaiting with resignation his impending fate. He saw no hope, except in the forgiveness of his brother; how could he show that he implored it, but by a certain submissive courtesy? But this politeness was neither hypocrisy nor unmanly timidity. Esau, a master of the sword from his youth, approached with four hundred men, well armed, and skilled in warfare; the result of a hostile attack upon Jacob, who had always been a peaceful shepherd, could easily be foreseen; the least appearance of resistance might provoke the anger of the irritable man; and it was meritorious to avert, by every honourable concession, a possible carnage. But conscience no less than expediency impelled Jacob to adopt a conciliatory course; he began to feel his wrong-doings, and had no longer the boldness to deny or to cover them; his politeness was, therefore, not only another measure of precaution, but was dictated by that spirit of contrition which had begun to work within him. He showed his subjection to his brother by the highest mark of respect, a sevenfold prostration. He deserved, and willingly submitted to, this humiliation: though blessed with the most glorious promises, he was now ob-

times, until he came near his brother.—4. And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept. 5. And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the women and the children, and said, Who *are* those with thee? And he said, The children whom God hath graciously given to thy servant. 6. Then the handmaids came near, they and their children, and they prostrated themselves. 7. And Leah also with her children came near, and they prostrated themselves; and afterwards Joseph came near, and Rachel, and they prostrated themselves. 8. And he said, What *meanest* thou by all this procession which I met? And he said, *These are* to find grace in the eyes of my lord. 9. And Esau said, I have much, my brother; keep that which thou hast to thyself.

liged to yield to superior force; he had robbed Esau of the birthright, and was now compelled to commit himself to his mercy; —thus had the justice of heaven been reconciled.

4—11. But now the character of Esau appears in its most beautiful light; he is, throughout, the full and genuine *man of nature*; his heart overflows with true and impulsive kindness; he spreads a genial glow over the scene; the truthful simplicity of his mind stands out in pleasing relief against the complicated emotions which hitherto had kept Jacob in constant struggle and excitement. The sight of his brother at once, as if by magic force, wipes away all the animosity of the past; he is irresistibly attracted by the mysterious tie of relationship formed by nature; he hastens towards his trembling brother, and sheds tears of joy in a long and cordial embrace. Who does not feel the overwhelming pathos of the scene? Who has not portrayed to himself the hardy chief, careless, wild, but uncorrupted in feeling, and generously forgiving, in the arms of the man of refined intellect, aspiring, scheming, at last repentant, and restored to his better self? —But it might be asked, whether Esau left Idumæa with hostile intentions, abandoning them when he saw his brother; or whether he was from the beginning resolved to meet the latter in a friendly spirit? The text leaves us in perfect doubt on this point. But the former supposition has far greater probability. Although his answer to the messengers was indistinct, it appeared to them ominous, and made upon them the impression, that an inimical attack was contemplated; Jacob understood it in the same sense; and hence his fears and precautions. Again, if Esau's intentions had been benevolent, it would have been unnecessary to march out with the strong escort of 400 men. Roused to a sudden impulse of revenge on being informed of Jacob's return, he proceeded with his men to satisfy it; but seeing his brother after such protracted absence, he was seized by an impulse of affection equally powerful; and as his mind, though untutored, had remained undepraved, the latter feeling prevailed. These sudden passions and ebullitions, in admirable harmony with Esau's character, are observable in all the principal transactions of his career. But however this may be, if Jacob was uncertain about Esau's intentions, *this doubt lay in the plan of the author*; since fear only could, in the interval between the return of the messengers and the arrival of Esau, effect those remarkable changes which we have above pointed out (p. 379).

10. And Jacob said, No, I pray thee, if now I have found grace in thy eyes, then receive my present at my hand: for therefore have I seen thy face, as I have seen the face of God, and thou hast been gracious to me. 11. Take, I pray thee, my blessing which is brought to thee; because God hath been merciful to me, and because I have everything. And he urged him, and he took *it*.—12. And he said, Let us journey on, and let us go, and I will go at thy side. 13. And he said to him, My lord knoweth that the children *are* tender, and the flocks and herds *are* young with me: and if *the men* should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die. 14. Let my lord, I pray

Jacob urged and pressed his brother to accept the present prepared for him. Did this earnestness flow from the desire of being fully satisfied of his brother's conciliation, which would have been rendered doubtful by the refusal of the present, in accordance with Oriental usage and notions? But after the fervent and affectionate meeting, he could no longer question Esau's disposition towards him; the outburst of feeling had been so spontaneous and powerful, that it could not easily be doubted. However, Jacob added a remark, throwing a strong light upon the subject, and containing a welcome confirmation of the view above taken. He said: "for therefore I have seen thy face, as I have seen the face of God, and thou hast been gracious to me." These words, which have too often been quoted as a proof of Jacob's base flattery, are the most convincing symptom of his moral regeneration. He had immediately before "seen God face to face" (xxxii. 31); he had conquered God, and obtained His forgiveness as a reward of his sincere repentance (ver. 30); that ambiguous name, in which Esau especially had found the meaning of deceit, had been changed into another appellation, expressing high moral dignity (ver. 29): and he now *saw the face of Esau as he had seen the face of God*; he felt the same repentance with regard to his brother, as he had felt with regard to God; he implored the pardon of the former, as he had obtained that of the latter; the hearty reception appeared to him like a guarantee that he had secured it; for he added: "and thou hast been gracious to me"; and his agitated mind was neither calmed nor satisfied, till he, whom he had so seriously injured, had accepted the gift, as an offering of thanks and expiation.—Thus he had made his peace with all whom he had offended: with Laban, with Esau, and with God.

12—17. The angels of peace and of love seem to hover over the charm of the preceding scene; and the heart lingers with delight in contemplating the noble emulation of generosity and confidence. But is not this harmony too soon disturbed? Does not again a spirit of suspicion and reserve overshadow the mind of Jacob? Is he incapable of rising to the natural purity of his disinterested brother? Or does his keen intellect teach him how imprudent it would be unguardedly to rely upon the fallacious calmness of a passionate mind? Admitted even, that Jacob's apprehensions were, in this respect, exaggerated, his precaution was the result of a deep insight into Esau's character; the most insignificant circumstance might recall to his memory the events of the past; his rage might be re-kindled; and, though perhaps later bewailing his rashness, he might, by his superiority, be misled to deeds of cruel revenge. When, therefore, Esau wished to accompany Jacob, for protection, through the regions with which

thee, pass over before his servant: and I will lead on in my *usual* slow pace, according to the cattle which *is* before me, and according to the children, until I come to my lord to Seir. 15. And Esau said, Let me, I pray thee, leave with thee *some* of the men who *are* with me. And he said, Wherefore do I thus find grace in the eyes of my lord? 16. And Esau returned that day on his way to Seir. 17. And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built for himself a house, and made booths for his cattle: therefore the name of the place is called Succoth [booths].—18. And Jacob came in safety to the city of Shechem, which *is* in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padan-aram; and he

his excursions had made him familiar, the latter cautiously declined the offer; he refused even the garrison or guard which Esau proposed to leave him; but he promised, of his own accord, to visit him in his home in Seir; for he knew, that the sacred rights of hospitality would there protect him, even against an outbreak of passion. But though the objections of Jacob may have been as many evasions, they were not untruths; he could certainly not, without great danger, follow with his encumbered caravan, the march of Esau; and the latter seemed to acknowledge the justness of the remark; but he opposed the second offer with the simple question: "Wherefore do I thus find grace in the sight of my lord"? He invented no fictitious pretext; he thus almost exposed himself to the danger of arousing his brother's suspicion; but he had banished deceit from his heart; and he preferred risk to falsehood. Whether he really paid the promised visit to Esau in Idumæa, is not recorded in the following narrative. But it suffices to know, that such was his sincere intention; and we find later the two brothers united in love and friendship (xxxv. 29; comp. xxxvi. 6, 7).

Esau now returned to his adopted country, whilst Jacob proceeded from Peniel in a western or south-western direction, till he arrived in the neighbourhood of the Jordan. Here, permitting himself a short interval of rest, he built a house for himself, and erected for his cattle tents or booths, whence this place was called *Succoth*. As in this journey of the patriarch, so, in the later history of the Hebrews, the towns Peniel and Succoth are connected with each other. When Gideon, in pursuit of his enemies, had crossed the Jordan, he first asked the assistance of the inhabitants of Succoth; and, when treated by them with spite and disdain, he advanced to Peniel, where, however, he met with no more friendly reception. Both towns felt, a little later, the severe revenge of the victorious general. Our remarks on the relative position of Mizpah, Mahanaim, and Peniel, make the situation of Succoth certain. It must necessarily be sought in the south of the Jabbok, in a valley very near the Jordan; and it also belonged to the tribe of Gad.

18—20. At last Jacob passed the Jordan, and proceeded in a direction almost exactly west, to Shechem, the centre of the promised land, whither Abraham also had first repaired after his arrival from Mesopotamia, where he received the first promise on sacred soil, and where he built the first altar (xii. 6, 7; see pp. 210, 211). His grand-son followed his example in almost every respect. But Jacob had far greater reasons for deep gratitude than his sire had at that time. He had gone out as a poor pilgrim, and returned as a wealthy emir; he had successfully combated against his adversaries and against his own evil

pitched his tents before the city. 19. And he bought the piece of the field, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for a hundred kesitahs. 20. And he erected there an altar, and called it El-elohe-Jisrael [The Omnipotent, God of Israel].

inclinations; his return was, therefore, not the commencement of a promise, but the beginning of fulfilment; and, hence, the text declares with intended emphasis, that Jacob came back *in peace and safety;* he had been preserved to inherit the paternal blessing, and had been purified to deserve it; hence, further, Jacob did not merely encamp in or before Shechem, but he bought a piece of land as his own permanent property: whereas Abraham had acquired *a burial-ground* (xxiii.), and Isaac was but temporarily allowed to cultivate the field to which he had happened to roam as a nomad (xxvi. 12—17). Deeply impressed with the obligations he owed to God for all these mercies, he erected the first altar which bore the name of the God, not of Jacob, nor of Abraham and Isaac, but of *Israel*, and which, therefore, prospectively pointed into the future history of the *holy* nation.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

SUMMARY.—Dinah, mixing among the Hivites, was seen and seduced by Shechem the son of Hamor, the chief of the country. Jacob, informed of the ignominy, silently awaited the return of his sons, who were pasturing the flocks in the fields. The latter were roused to profound hatred against him who had defiled the honour of their family. But Shechem loved Dinah, and induced his father to ask her to wife for him from Jacob and his sons. The latter expressed consent, but imposed the condition that Shechem and Hamor, and all their male subjects, should submit to the rite of circumcision. When this had been agreed to, both by the prince, and his son, and their people, on the third day Simeon and Levi made a violent attack on the defenceless town, killed all the males, and carried away immense spoil, to the consternation of Jacob.

1. And Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she had born to Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land. 2. And

1—4. The life of Jacob, the interest of which reaches far beyond that of an ordinary biography, and which, as a type, represents the history of a large genus rather than of one individual, admits of an unforced division into four chief periods. Firstly, *the sin and falsehood* of an aspiring mind, unscrupulous in the application of the means, trusting to the brilliancy of the intellect rather than the simplicity of the heart, and regarding as a merit and a gain whatever is acquired by the activity of the brain. Secondly, the *purification* by a sudden consciousness of guilt; the better nature awakens; a swift ray of light at once points out to the humiliated pilgrim the path of truth and rectitude; the Divine spark is kindled; and the victories of the past appear like so many defeats full of reproach and shame. The *atonement*, by punishment, which then necessarily follows, forms the third period. And if the purification has been sincere, and the atonement borne with humble resignation, the conclusion of life, or the last epoch, exhibits the *conciliation*, or the peace of mind, accompanied, if Providence grants it, by external prosperity. We have arrived at the third epoch in Jacob's life; we may be certain that the

Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw her, and he took her, and lay with her, and used violence against her. 3. And his soul clove to Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the maiden, and spoke to the heart of the maiden. 4. And Shechem said to his father Hamor, saying, Take for me this girl to wife.—5. And

events composing it, will be melancholy and trying; for his sins were both numerous and grave; but we may, with equal confidence, anticipate a fourth stage, replete with true satisfaction and felicity; for though his chief offence, the deceit in the appropriation of the birthright and the blessing, must be profoundly abhorred, its source was a Divine, though misunderstood, oracle; and its aim was the acquirement of the noblest spiritual privileges.

The text has hitherto displayed most admirable consistency in portraying the *character* of Jacob, naturally prominent in the two first periods; let us see how his *destinies* are delineated, preponderating in the two last. It is true, that punishment was not withheld even from the former two epochs of his life; he paid for his *sins* the immediate penalty of exile and hardship; and he acquired his *purification* only in the midst of anguish and fear of death: this was necessary, for sin does not only occasion punishment, but is its own punishment; but other retaliation besides that necessarily incidental in the crimes, was required by the Divine justice; and Jacob drank deeply from the cup of misery.

Not without reason, had Dinah been mentioned previously among the children of Leah (xxx. 21); she was intended to be the first cause of her father's sorrow. An interval of six or eight years elapsed between the departure from Mesopotamia and the event here narrated; Dinah had become a blooming maiden; she had reached that age when Oriental virgins attain the full charm of their beauty. During that long sojourn in Shechem, she formed friendships with the daughters of the natives, and had entered with them into social intercourse. Was this conduct culpable? Was it an offence deserving punishment? It almost appears that it was regarded as such; for she became both an object of violence and the cause of massacre; and, in Biblical history, there exists no misfortune without corresponding guilt. Dinah had not preserved in her mind the vocation of her family; she did not comprehend that a perfect separation was indispensable from idolatrous tribes, whose moral reformation could not be expected, whose pernicious example could only infect the Hebrews, and whose doom was sealed on account of their iniquity. She paid the full penalty of her carelessness. She suffered the fate which Sarah and Rebekah encountered in the land of Pharaoh and of Abimelech; she was seen and taken by the son of the prince; but no angel guarded her innocence; no Divine vision shielded her from disgrace; and she fell a victim to Shechem's passion. She did not require that immediate protection which her ancestors had enjoyed; she was a maiden, no wife; her father possessed a piece of land within which he was safe; and she belonged to a numerous family well capable of defending their rights. But Shechem was neither licentious nor frivolous; though he had been ensnared by passion, his heart was not debased, and he was ready to make the only reparation which the circumstances permitted; he loved Dinah; his soul clung to her; and he spoke to her heart; he endeavoured to secure her affection, and wished to make her his legitimate wife; he therefore asked his father to treat for him, and to solicit the consent of her family.

5—7. Jacob soon heard of the shame of his daughter; he was alone when he

Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter — but his sons were with his cattle in the field — and Jacob was silent until they were come.—6. And Hamor the father of Shechem went out to Jacob to speak to him. 7. And the sons of Jacob came out of the field when they heard *it:* and the men were grieved, and they were very wroth, because he had wrought iniquity in Israel in lying with Jacob's daughter; and this ought not to be done.— 8. And Hamor spoke to them, saying, The soul of my son Shechem longeth for your daughter: give her, I pray you, to him to wife. 9. And make you marriages with us: give your daughters to us, and take our daughters to you. 10. And you may dwell with us: and the land may be

received this distressing news, for his sons were with the flocks in the field: and what was his first emotion? "He was silent till they came" (ver. 5). The case was, indeed, complicated. He had learnt, no doubt, together with Shechem's crime, his love and his proposal; he saw, therefore, strong and evident proofs of his earnest repentance; could he, after the varied experience of his own heart, disdain it; had he not himself felt its regenerating power and its efficacy? He saw, further, in Shechem's proposal, the only means, in an ordinary point of view, of restoring the honour of his daughter and of his name; should he refuse it? Why, then, did he hesitate? He, no doubt, appreciated the repentance; but he was reluctant to accept the proposal. He had begun to view the occurrences of life, not after their temporal expediency, but in connection with their moral value and their religious import; though Dinah was the victim of violence, she had occasioned it by a reprehensible neglect; and though Shechem was a liberal and generous man, he had disregarded one of the most sacred laws of morality; and, as a heathen, he could never be the husband of his daughter. Dinah and Shechem were both excusable in one respect, and guilty in another; the decision of right and wrong was embarassing, and the choice of the measure to be adopted difficult; Jacob was placed in a painful dilemma; and "he was silent."

But his sons were in the period of impetuous youth; their judgment was in their feeling; not balancing, with nice discrimination the wrongs and the excuses, they saw nothing but the disgrace of their sister, and the stain of their house; their grief soon assumed the vehemence of a passion and of wrath; and a sentiment of hatred and vindictiveness sank deep into their hearts. But the reason of their anger is very significantly stated: "Because Shechem had done iniquity *in Israel*"; he was the first who had desecrated and defiled the *holiness* of the *chosen* family; and they felt that this ought not be done, or if done, not to be tolerated.

8—12. Whilst such emotions were storming in their minds, Hamor and his son arrived to negotiate. The father, in broaching the proposal, simply stated the affection of Shechem for Dinah, asked her for his wife, and offered, as a compensation, that the Hebrews and the Hivites should henceforth form one nation, in intermarriage, commerce, and acquisition of landed property. He made no mention, no remote allusion, to the infamy brought upon Dinah. The son, Shechem, prompted by love, hastened to confirm the proposal of his father, and assured his readiness to give any amount of marriage-money, or of presents, that might

before you; dwell and trade therein, and acquire possessions therein. 11. And Shechem said to her father and to her brothers, Let me find grace in your eyes, and what you will say to me, I shall give. 12. Ask of me ever so much dowry and gift, and I will give as you will say to me: but give me the maiden to wife.—13. And the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father deceitfully, and spoke, because he had defiled Dinah their sister: 14. And they said to them, We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to a man who is uncircumcised; for that *were* a reproach to us: 15. But under this *condition* we shall consent to you: If you will be like ourselves, that every male of you be circumcised; 16. Then we shall give our

be demanded; and he offered unreservedly to submit to the will of the father and the brothers (see p. 309). But though a confession of guilt might have been implied in that unlimited liberality, it was not made openly and frankly; it was covered and not discussed: and thus the rankling animosity on the part of Jacob's sons was nourished rather than extinguished.

13—17. Jacob had scarcely time to advance a reply; for his sons eagerly availed themselves of the large share of influence generally allowed to brothers in the matrimonial arrangements of their sisters; and they acted with a zeal to which he thought he might safely trust the matter. But he was doomed too soon to perceive his error. Though the impetuosity of the sons might have appeared fatal to moderate and prudent action, it could scarcely be expected to be coupled with deceit and cold machination; however inordinate, it seemed, at least, the emanation of frank and generous minds. They deliberated on the reply which they should return; but their council was exclusively guided by the thought that their sister had been defiled (ver. 13), and they weighed no other circumstance. They were certainly right in disregarding the very considerable worldly advantages offered to them; they had it in their hands, to become at once, from strangers, or tolerated settlers, the independent allies and associates of a powerful tribe; they disdained these prospects of wealth and influence, because they would thereby have endangered more than by any other contingency that very principle of separation which they were then struggling to uphold; they remembered the prophecy given to Abraham, that they could inherit Palestine only "when the sin of the Amorites would be complete," and in the appointed season; it would have been against the will of Providence, had they acquired then already a part of the land *as a political community*; and they resigned, therefore, without hesitation, the *national* advantages, intent only upon defending their *domestic* dignity. What, then, was the reply they ought to have given to Hamor and his son? They could never consent to a marriage between Shechem, the Canaanite, and their own sister. Had so many sacrifices been brought, and so great precautions been taken, to preserve the purity of Abraham's race, in order that now promiscuous alliances should be freely permitted? It was impossible to overthrow the foundation of the new faith. The brothers were, therefore, on principle, compelled firmly to reject Shechem's proposal; and either to consider his repentance and the burning wound of his disappointed love as sufficient punishments; or, if they could not control their passion, to revenge their sister openly and manfully.

daughters to you, and take your daughters to us, and we shall dwell with you, and become one people. 17. But if you will not listen to us, to be circumcised; then we shall take our daughter, and depart. — 18. And their words pleased Hamor, and Shechem Hamor's son. 19. And the young man delayed not to do that thing, because he had delight in Jacob's daughter: and he *was* honoured more than all the house of his father. 20. And Hamor and Shechem his son came to the gate of their city, and spoke to the men of their city, saying, 21. These men *are* peaceable with us; therefore let them dwell in the land, and trade therein; for the land, behold, *it is* large before them; let us take their daughters to us for wives, and let us give them our daughters. 22. Only under this *condition* will the men consent to us to dwell with us, to be one people, if every male among us be circumcised, as they *are* circumcised. 23. *Will* not their cattle and their property and all their beasts *be* ours? only let us consent to them,

But they preferred a very different line of conduct. One simple expedient appeared open. If Hamor and the Shechemites adopted the religion of Jacob's family, they might, so it seemed, form with it one people; and a perpetual friendship might thus be expected. This view, however, was erroneous. For through the *seed of Abraham* only was the blessing of the world promised; whereas the tribes of Canaan contained within themselves the germs of political and moral dissolution; and the progeny of Shechem could never have participated in the future glory of the people of Israel. Yet that view was so natural, and appeared so near the truth, that Shechem, the heathen, less familiar with the spirit of the Divine promises, at once acceded to it, whilst the sons of Jacob were well aware of its fallacy; and this was the criminal *deceit* of their answer.

18—24. Shechem, in accepting the stipulation, forgot that ceremonies are not faith, and that circumcision is not identical with monotheism; he was not moved by the truth of Jacob's religion, but induced by motives purely human. This is another guilt both of the brothers and of Shechem; of the former, because they thus profaned the holiest symbol they possessed, the sign of the covenant; and of the latter, because he abandoned his own faith without attempting to penetrate into the meaning of the religion he adopted. Circumcision, in itself but the modification of the grossest and most repulsive form of paganism, and retained among the Hebrews only because its neglect was regarded as a reproach and a shame (ver. 14), if not understood in the abstract spirit of Mosaism, is far more apt to foster than to correct superstitious notions (see p. 251).—The influence and eloquence of Hamor and Shechem easily gained the men of their town over to their plans; they dwelt chiefly upon the great material advantages which would accrue from such alliance; the men whose friendship they sought, were peaceable and industrious; they were active traders, sure to increase the resources of the land; but they were especially excellent breeders of cattle, a circumstance which would be of vast im-

that they may dwell with us. 24. And all who went out of the gate of his city listened to Hamor, and to Shechem his son, and every male was circumcised, all that went out of the gate of his city.—25. And on the third day, when they were in pain, two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinahs brother's, took each his sword, and they came upon the city in safety, and slew all the males. 26. And they slew Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah out of Shechem's house, and went away. 27. The sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and spoiled the city, because they had defiled their sister. 28. They took their sheep, and their oxen, and their asses, and that which *was* in the city, and that which *was* in the field, 29. And all their wealth, and all their little ones, and their wives they took captive, and made *it* their spoil, and *they took* all that *was* in the house.— 30. And Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, You have troubled me to bring me into ill-odour among the inhabitants of the land, among

portance to themselves: and without alluding to their own individual case, they added that intermarriages with such people were highly desirable. The condition of the alliance was at once adopted and carried into effect.

25—29. The nefarious design of the brothers was maturing to its end. They were engaged in a holy cause, the honour of their sister, and they feigned to pursue it by sacred means; but religion was but the cloak for violence and vindictiveness; and a false moderation ensnared the credulous victims. But not all the eleven sons were equally hardened. Though, in the first excitement of their passion, they might have been unanimous in swearing sanguinary vengeance to the defiler of their house, the interval of some days appeased the minds of the greater part; and two only, Simeon and Levi, full brothers of Dinah, persevered in their implacable rage. Entering the defenceless city, without meeting resistance, they ruthlessly massacred every male inhabitant; Hamor and Shechem were among the slain; and after having filled the town with blood and endless misery, they ransacked it, and returned to their homes with the curse-laden fruits of their iniquity. Dinah, who had remained in Shechem's house, apparently not against her will, and, no doubt, awaiting the decision of her father and her brothers (vers. 3, 4, 17, 26), was brought back to the paternal roof. Had Shechem deserved this untimely end? Had he been a Hebrew, and were the matter to be decided by the Mosaic Law, he would have been *bound* to marry Dinah (Deut. xxii. 28, 29): could his offence, then, be so impardonable when he *desired* to make her his wife? As the principles adopted in the family of Abraham were peculiar, and, perhaps, not precisely known, their neglect on the part of strangers, though not to be tolerated, ought not to have been punished with unrelenting severity. But, further, why were the innocent inhabitants included in the carnage? Revenge, blind, cruel, and destructive, had satisfied its unholy thirst, but the manes of the murdered survived to appear as fearful accusers.

30, 31. With what feelings did Jacob regard the conduct of his sons? Though

the Canaanites and the Perizzites: and I *am* few in number, and they will gather themselves against me, and will slay me, and I shall be destroyed, I and my house. 31. And they said, Should he deal with our sister as with an unchaste woman?

he could not applaud their violence, he, no doubt, saw their zeal and eager watchfulness with satisfaction; for they were to him cheering proofs, that they understood the mission entrusted to their family. When they agreed upon the proposal regarding circumcision, Jacob was evidently not in their council; he is not mentioned when their decision was announced to Hamor and Shechem (ver. 13); and when he heard of the flagitious bloodshed of Simeon and Levi, he was filled with pain, and uttered a sorrowful reproof. And though the reproach was but leniently expressed (ver. 30), he felt the crime in all its heinousness; and though he alluded mainly to the terrible revenge possibly impending from the powerful Canaanites, he was not the less deeply grieved by the immorality and wickedness of the deed. For he felt, that he had, as yet, no sufficient right to be a severe judge of virtue and vice; he had not long since also been guilty of "deceit" (xxvii. 35); he, therefore, put the stress chiefly on the external dangers, in which he could not expect Divine assistance, since they were merited. But later, when he had fulfilled the period of his expiation, he denounced the deed with a force, proving the profound internal horror with which he regarded it, and which he was unable to conquer even in the last moments of his life (xlix. 5—7); the swords of Simeon and Levi are designated as weapons of violence; their work is murder; the holy presence of God flies their impious assembly; their wrath is cursed, and their vehemence branded; homeless dispersion is their dreary lot.—This instance teaches us, at the same time, how we have to judge of Jacob's conduct in the house of Laban. Though the text does not always insert a formal judgment, its spirit is that of uncompromising morality; and the higher the standard, the severer the verdict.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Summary.—On the command of God, Jacob journeyed to Bethel; but before his departure from Shechem, he ordered his household to bury all their idols and other objects of superstition under a certain oak in the neighbourhood of the town (vers. 1—7).—Deborah, the nurse of Rebekah, died and was interred south of Bethel, under the "Oak of Weeping" (ver. 8).—God appeared to Jacob again, and re-iterated the former worldly and religious blessings; and the patriarch erected on the place of the vision a pillar, which he consecrated by libations of wine and oil (vers. 9—15).—Rachel giving birth to a second son, Benjamin, died, north of Bethlehem, where her grave was marked by a monument (vers. 16—20).—Reuben committed incest with Bilhah, near Migdal-Eder (vers. 21, 22).—The twelve sons of Jacob are again enumerated (vers. 23—26).—Jacob arrived in Hebron, where Isaac was then living (ver. 27).—The latter died, a hundred and eighty years old, and was buried in the cave of Machpelah by his sons Esau and Jacob (vers. 28, 29).

1. And God said to Jacob, Rise, go up to Beth-el, and dwell there; and make there an altar to God, who ap-

1—5. When Jacob, compelled by guilt and fear, left the land of his birth, he vowed at Bethel, where God had appeared to him, that if he returned in safety and

peared to thee when thou fledst before Esau thy brother. 2. And Jacob said to his house*hold*, and to all that *were* with him, Remove the strange gods that *are* among you, and clean yourselves, and change your garments: 3. And let us rise, and go up to Beth-el; and I will make there an altar to God, who answered me in the day of my dis-

happiness, he would consecrate the stone which he had erected, into a sanctuary of God, and would devote to Him the tenth part of his property (xxviii. 10—22). Now he had returned to Canaan "in safety" (xxxiii. 18); he had not only received "bread to eat, and garments to put on," but he had become a man of wealth and power: and yet he seemed by no means anxious to fulfil his vow; for instead of proceeding to Bethel, he tarried at Shechem at least six or eight years: what is the reason of such palpable neglect, the more surprising, as Jacob's mind had undergone a total reformation; as he had "wrestled, and conquered"? The answer is obvious. The consecration of the holy edifice at Bethel was not merely intended as an act of gratitude; it was designed to mark the full and perfect recognition of the God of Abraham by all the members of his house, and to form the foundation of that "house of God," which was first to unite all the tribes of Israel, and then all the nations of the earth. But on his return from Mesopotamia, Jacob found his family far from prepared for such a life of religious purity; his wives had deeply imbibed the idolatrous notions of their father; Rachel did not consider herself safe, except by the stolen image of the Teraphim; the servants which he had acquired in Aramæa, were heathens; and his sons might even, under such influences, have adopted questionable or dangerous views. His journey to Bethel would certainly have been premature before his family and household were willing and capable to embrace the truths to which he was himself so deeply attached. Isolated from every connection with his pagan neighbours, living on a soil which he had acquired by purchase, he was resolved to wait till the spirit of his noble faith would pervade his family; and anxious to accelerate this desirable consummation, he erected, on his property, an altar, and called it significantly: "the Omnipotent, God of Israel" (xxxiii. 20); but when he hoped he was approaching his aim, he saw with sorrow the imprudence of his daughter Dinah, who entertained an injurious intercourse with a pagan tribe, endanger the work of reform; he could no longer with safety stay at Shechem, where sanguinary revenge threatened him; he was compelled to leave his acquired property before his plans were matured; the conduct of his daughter as well as of his sons proved to him too clearly how little his admonitions had as yet taken root; and he saw himself once more obliged, not to *depart*, but to *fly*. When he was in this dilemma, God ordered him to proceed to Bethel, and to erect the altar which he had promised (ver. 1). But this command imposed upon the patriarch the duty of increased energy; it was impossible to disobey it; yet he felt, that it involved obligations not solely depending upon his own will. He, therefore, employed the whole weight of his authority as the head of the house, to demand its purification from all heathen images and emblems; he knew well, that the spontaneous growth of truth from within would have been preferable, and that it would have afforded surer guarantees against a relapse; but he had at least the satisfaction of seeing the readiness with which his command was obeyed; he found the minds not quite unprepared for the doctrines of a better religion; — he had not tarried at Shechem in vain.

What place, then, does the massacre and the subsequent flight occupy in the history of the patriarch? Both the infamy and the dismay were certainly regarded as

tress, and was with me in the way which I went. 4. And they gave to Jacob all the strange gods that *were* in their hands, and the ear-rings which *were* in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which *was* by Shechem.—5. And they journeyed: and the terror of God was upon the cities that *were* round them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob.—6. And Jacob came to Luz, which *is* in the land of Canaan, that *is* Beth-el, he and all the people that *were* with him. 7. And he built there an altar, and called the place El-beth-el [God of Beth-el]; because there God had revealed Himself to him, when he fled before his brother.

8. And Deborah Rebekah's nurse died, and she was

the first punishments for his *past* failings: but as they are not connected with them by any internal or causal relation, they must, at the same time, be the consequence of some more immediate offence; they are, indeed, the unavoidable result of his plans in Shechem. He had offered a sacred vow, which it would have been his duty to fulfil without delay after his safe return; but as he had grown in piety, he freely enlarged the scope of his promise, including in its sphere, besides himself, all the members of his household: and he was hence, compelled indefinitely to postpone its realisation. This was an arbitrary change of the pledge; if it could not be interpreted as ingratitude or indifference, it certainly was a deviation from the strict spirit of his vow; and he had to bear its consequences, the hatred and revenge of the heathens. But as both his intentions and the means employed were noble and virtuous, God averted the impending danger; His fear checked the rage of the enemies; He prevented even their persecution; and He led Jacob and his household safely to Bethel.

But the patriarch had, besides, on his departure from the paternal house, offered the vow: "of all that Thou wilt give me, I shall surely give the tenth part to Thee" (xxviii. 22). Did he ever fulfil this promise? We believe, he redeemed it in the last act which he performed at Shechem. Collecting all the images and ear-rings found in his house, he buried them under a tree; these objects, mostly made of the precious metals, amounted, no doubt, to a very considerable value; they might well be regarded as the tenth part of his property; and as there were as yet no priests, acting as the ministers or representatives of God, he could in no more appropriate way realise his promise than by removing all objects, however costly, connected with idolatry; for he thus literally brought a sacrifice for that God who had heard him in his distress, and shielded him in all his paths (ver. 3).—The "strange gods" given up to him by the members of his house, included, no doubt, the Teraphim, and perhaps other idols also, brought with them from Mesopotamia, or adopted in Canaan. But ear-rings, that usual ornament of both men and women, were very frequently used as amulets, believed to avert evil, or to operate as a charm; they were often covered with allegorical figures or mysterious sentences, and endowed with supernatural powers of very various description, according to the deities to which they were consecrated; and they formed, therefore, one of the ordinary instruments of superstitious usages, which even Christianity was able but very gradually to extirpate. That they are incompatible with the monotheistic doctrines, requires no proof; they are included among

buried beneath Beth-el under an oak; and its name was called Allon-bachuth [Oak of Weeping].

9. And God appeared to Jacob again, when he came out of Padan-aram, and blessed him. 10. And God said to him, Thy name *is* Jacob: *but* thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and He called his name Israel. 11. And God said to him, I *am* God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a multitude of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come forth of thy loins; 12. And the land which I gave to Abraham and to Isaac, to thee I shall give it, and to thy seed after thee I shall give the land. 13. And God ascended from him on the place where He spoke with him.

the "enchantments" so strictly interdicted; and are enumerated by the prophet Isaiah among the objects ensnaring the faith of Israel (iii. 20). — As the removal of the strange gods and other dangerous objects was regarded as a religious covenant, implying the exclusive acknowledgment of the God of Jacob, it was attended by the ceremonies of external purification and change of garments: and if these rites are not baptism, they are its basis, and spring from kindred principles. — Jacob concealed the idols and the rings "under the oak which *is* by Shechem." If these words entitle us to understand a certain famous tree generally known, we cannot hesitate to identify it with that oak near Shechem mentioned in the history of the usurper Abimelech as "the oak of sorcerers" (Judg. ix. 37).

6, 7. Jacob, on his third flight, stopped at Bethel, as on the first, not to offer, but at last to realise vows. There he remembered with grateful piety the dangers he had escaped, and the love he had experienced: now that the hatred of his brother was soothed, and the protection of God was deserved and increased, he built an altar which he did not call simply that of his own God, but "the God of the *house of God*," because the Lord and His angels had there appeared to him, and had completely fulfilled what they had promised.

8. Jacob, on his way homewards, traversed the length of the land from Shechem to the south; and the historian inserted, therefore, all domestic information which he could in any way bring into connection with the patriarch's journey, and for which no appropriate place offered itself either in the preceding or the following part of the narrative. The arrangement of the facts is, therefore, *geographical* rather than *chronological*. Now it is certain, that Isaac and his family had, during the twenty years of Jacob's absence, wandered in different parts of the land; for he was in *Beer-sheba* when his son departed, and he had settled in *Hebron* when the latter returned (ver. 27; xxviii. 10); he might, therefore, at one period of his migrations, have come into the neighbourhood of Bethel; here, Deborah, the nurse of Rebekah, apparently loved with almost filial affection, died, and was buried under an oak, which hence received the name "Oak of Weeping". This event is, therefore, connected by a double thread with the chief subject of our chapter; it refers to the *home* to which Jacob hastened, and it has *local* relations to his journey.

9—15. When Jacob had consecrated the altar in Bethel, God not only repeated the material promises before made to himself and to his ancestors; but chiefly confirmed the spiritual dominion which his seed should exercise; therefore, the significant change of Jacob's name into

14. And Jacob erected a pillar on the place where He had spoken with him, a pillar of stone: and he offered a libation upon it, and poured upon it oil. 15. And Jacob called the name of the place where God had spoken with him, Beth-el [House of God].

16. And they journeyed from Beth-el, and there was still a distance of land to come to Ephrath: and Rachel travailed, and she laboured hard in her travail. 17. And when she laboured hard in her travail, the midwife said to her, Fear not, for thou wilt now have another son. 18. And when her soul was departing — for she died — she called his name Ben-oni [Son of my grief]: but his father called him Ben-jamin [Son of happiness]. 19. And Rachel died,

Israel is repeated; and this constitutes the principal "blessing." To commemorate this new vision, Jacob erected a monument of stone, sanctified it by a libation of wine and an ointment of oil, and called the place — Bethel, just as he had before, on a similar occasion, given the same appellation to a spot equally remarkable (xxviii. 19).

16—20. Jacob's journey to the south was, in the neighbourhood of Ephrath or Bethlehem, interrupted by an event at once happy and melancholy. Rachel, after an interval of about fourteen years, gave birth to another son; the wish which she had expressed in the name of her firstborn, Joseph, was at last fulfilled (xxx. 24). Jacob, in the transport of his joy, called the new-born child "son of my happiness." For one moment, delight and pride mingled in his breast; he was the father of *twelve* sons, destined to become the ancestors of a nation singularly privileged; and one son at least was born to him, not while in the condition of servitude, but of independence and wealth. But he paid for this blessing with the life of his beloved Rachel, who, feeling her strength vanish, and her end approach, called the child "son of my misery." Jacob's gratification was suddenly converted into grief and mourning. He marked her grave by a conspicuous monument long revered by the tribes of Israel: but she lived in her husband's heart who continued to love her fondly in the sons she had left him.—The locality of the grave and the monument is scarcely uncertain according to our text. It must be in the *neighbourhood* of Bethlehem, and in the *north* of this town, because it lies "on the way" to it for those who come from Bethel.—Bethlehem itself was situated six Roman miles south of Jerusalem, within the territory of Judah; though built on a rocky elevation, its surrounding plains produce such abundant vegetation, that it received the name of the "fertile town," which is, in fact, nearly synonymous with its ordinary name, "store-house of corn or bread." Though too small to be enumerated among the towns of Judah, it has become one of the most celebrated cities within the boundaries of the Holy Land, as the birthplace of the founder of the chief royal dynasty of Israel and of the Christian faith. Though Rehoboam fortified it, it remained politically insignificant, and is at present a village rather than a town, bearing the ancient Hebrew name *Beit lahm*, inhabited by about 3,000 souls, mostly Catholic and Armenian Christians, but frequently visited by travellers on account of its historical reminiscences. Though the edifice now visible on the traditional site of Rachel's grave, about half an hour north of Bethlehem, is of later origin, there is no reason to doubt that it

and was buried on the way to Ephrath, which *is* Bethlehem. 20. And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave: that *is* the pillar of Rachel's grave to this day. — 21. And Israel journeyed, and spread his tent beyond Migdal-Eder. 22. And it happened when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah, his father's concubine: and Israel heard *it*.—

And the sons of Jacob were twelve: 23. The sons of Leah; Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, and Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Zebulun: 24. The sons of Rachel; Joseph, and Benjamin: 25. And the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid; Dan, and Naphtali: 26. And the sons of Zilpah, Leah's handmaid; Gad and Asher:

occupies the place of the original monumental pile to which our text alludes, and which was evidently highly renowned in the author's time. Benjamin of Tudela, who visited the place in about 1160, describes the monument as consisting of eleven stones, covered by a cupola which rests upon four pillars; while Petachia, another Jewish traveller of the same century, like Edrisi, adds, that at the top is a twelfth stone on which Jacob's name is engraved. In the seventeenth century, the Mohammedans erected on the spot a small square building, or rather mass of masonry, supported by four pillars, forming open arches, plastered with white stucco on the outer surface, surrounded by a wall, and high enough to give the impression as if it enclosed an ancient pillar possibly found on the grave.

21. Jacob, continuing his journey, passed Migdal-Eder. It has hitherto been vainly attempted to fix the situation of this place, which, however, if there are at all order and consistency in our narrative, must be sought for south of Bethlehem; here, indeed, tradition still points out a "Jacob's Tower"; and the hill on the eastern side of Mount Zion, bearing the same name, is, therefore, perfectly out of the question.

22. When the patriarch heard, with grief, the violence of his second and third son, he felt, that though their revenge was mean, its motive was noble, and its end virtuous; and he expressed his disapprobation in lenient terms: but when, nearly approaching his father's house, he was informed that his eldest son, Reuben, had committed incest, an offence of death and horror, his speech failed him; he was overwhelmed and spell-bound by shame and sorrow: the purity of his house was defiled; but he bore this affliction also with resignation and submission; and it was counted to him for an atonement. However, by this misdeed Reuben forfeited his birthright; and he was doomed to bear the curse of his dying parent (xlix. 3, 4).

23—26. When Jacob, who had left the paternal house as a solitary and helpless pilgrim, was about to re-enter it as the father of a numerous family and the master of a large household, propriety and gratitude demanded to survey once more at least his children; and therefore the list of his twelve sons is here introduced. They are arranged according to their mothers, but so that, with regard to the sons of the maid-servants, a *chronological* order is observed; for the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's maid, are enumerated before those of Zilpah, Leah's servant, because they were born first. Although Benjamin was born in Canaan, he is yet mentioned among the sons with whom Jacob was blessed in Mesopotamia; perhaps because the whole period between his departure and his re-

these *are* the sons of Jacob, who were born to him in Padan-aram.

27. And Jacob came to Isaac his father, to Mamre, to Kiriath-Arbah, which *is* Hebron, where Abraham and Isaac sojourned.

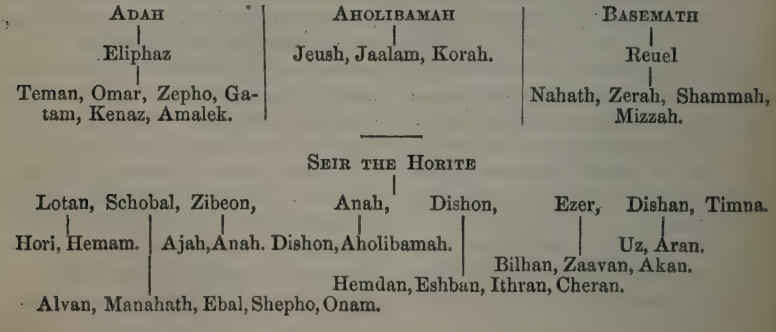
28. And the days of Isaac were a hundred and eighty years. 29. And Isaac expired and died, and was gathered to his people, old and full of days: and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

turn to his father's house, is regarded as the time of his pilgrimage, and comprised in the Mesopotamian journey.

27—29. Jacob, at last, after so many migrations, was once more in the presence of his aged father; he could now step before him with calmer mind and purer conscience: when he departed from him he was turbulent, pretending, and impetuously bent upon a cherished aim; now he had secured it, reconciled with his injured brother, and at peace with himself. Whether his mother, Rebekah, survived to see her favourite again, we are not informed: Hebrew tradition relates that she died simultaneously with Deborah, immediately after having despatched the latter to invite Jacob home, in accordance with her promise given to him at the period of his flight (xxvii. 45). But she probably died in Hebron; and it is certain that she was buried in the cave of Machpelah where Abraham and Sarah were entombed before her, and Isaac, Leah, and Jacob after her (xlix. 31).—Jacob settled in Hebron and lived with his father a considerable number of years. And as thus the historian had occasion to mention Isaac, but had no other remarkable circumstance to relate concerning him, he at once concludes his history, and records his death, though occurring at a considerably later period.—Esau arrives from his mountains and deserts of Seir, in order to render his father the last service of love (compare xxv. 9).

CHAPTER XXXVI.

SUMMARY.—The genealogy of Esau is introduced under the following six divisions: 1. His children from his three wives (vers. 1—8). 2. The *families* of his children (vers. 9—14). 3. The *dukedoms* arising from the families (vers. 15—19). 4. The descendants of Seir the Horite (vers. 20—30). 5. The *kings* of Edom (vers. 31—39). 6. The dukedoms of the Edomites according to their *local* distribution (vers. 40—43). The following table embodies some of the principal sections of the chapter:—



1. And these *are* the generations of Esau, that *is* Edom. 2. Esau took his wives of the daughters of Canaan; Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite, and Aholibamah the daughter of Anah the daughter of Zibeon the Hivite; 3. And Basemath Ishmael's daughter, sister of Nebajoth.—4. And Adah bore to Esau Eliphaz; and Basemath bore Reuel; 5.

1—3. The genealogies belong to the most important parts of the Scriptures; they are the landmarks of the narrative; they at once connect and separate the various sections; and are, in themselves, generally most valuable relics of antiquarian knowledge. But there are few lists equal in regularity of arrangement to that of the present chapter; and it is, therefore, a matter of more than ordinary interest carefully to analyse it, and to deduce the historical lessons concealed in its unpretending form.

But we must confess, that it offers the greatest difficulties to the critical expositor; that it contains statements which seem to defy every attempt at conciliation; and that it almost compels to inferences of the most perplexing nature. As truth, unfettered by preconceptions, is our only end, we approach this subject without the least anxiety as to the result; we are too deeply impressed with the sublimity of the Biblical doctrines to dread historical discrepancies or chronological incongruities: that which is worth preserving, can never be lost; and that which does not stand the test of impartial scrutiny, no artifice can save.

The difficulties begin with the names of Esau's three wives, if compared with the preceding notices on the same subject (xxvi.34; xxviii.9). Two names are entirely different: here, Adah and Aholibamah; there, Judith and Mahalath; and the third, Basemath, though occurring in both accounts, is not perfectly identical in both; for, while here Basemath is the daughter of Ishmael, she is, in the earlier notice, the daughter of Elon, the Hittite. It avails, therefore, little to suppose, that Judith and Mahalath, in accordance with an eastern usage, possessed also, or received later, other names, Adah and Aholibamah. Further, the last-mentioned wife is here called, "the daughter of Anah, the grand-daughter of *Zibeon*, the *Hivite*" (ver.2); whereas she is, in a later part of this chapter, introduced as the daughter of Anah, the grand-daughter of *Seir*, the *Horite* (vers. 20, 25). Therefore, even the proposed but unauthorised change of *Hivite* (ver. 2) into *Horite* would be insufficient to remove the divergence. Again, even granting that Judith is the same person as Aholibamah, she is, in our chapter, mentioned as the daughter of Anah (ver.2); while she is before called the daughter of Beeri (xxvi. 34): the conciliation which has been offered, namely, that Anah, discovering warm springs (ver. 24), hence received the name of "the man of the well," that is, Beeri, is illusory; for this Anah is the son of Zibeon (ver. 24), whereas the father of Aholibamah is the son of Seir. From whatever side, therefore, we undertake to effect a harmony, we meet with difficulties, which can only be overlooked by negligence, and disregarded by uncritical indifference. We are obliged to confess that the Hebrew text, though containing several important coincidences, evidently embodies two accounts, irreconcilably different. But several other discrepancies which have been urged, are of little weight.

4—8. The chapter consists of six distinct parts exhibiting a clear progress. The first verse describes succinctly its character; it is a genealogy of Esau, not, however, representing merely a family or personal history; it is political and national; therefore, it is added: "Esau that is Edom"; the identity of the founder with the tribe itself is several

And Aholibamah bore Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah: these *are* the sons of Esau, who were born to him in the land of Canaan. 6. And Esau took his wives, and his sons, and his daughters, and all the persons of his house, and his cattle, and all his beasts, and all his wealth, which he had acquired in the land of Canaan; and went into *another* country on account of his brother Jacob. 7. For their property was more than that they might dwell together; and the land wherein they were strangers could not bear them because of their cattle. 8. Thus Esau dwelt in mount Seir: Esau that *is* Edom.

9. And these *are* the generations of Esau, the father of the Edomites, in mount Seir: 10. These *are* the names

times repeated (vers. 8, 19), and is on two occasions even more distinctly expressed by the terms: "Esau the father of Edom" (vers. 9, 43). The text systematically shows the gradual growth and increase of the house of Esau. Through his three wives he became the father of five sons; Adah and Bashemath gave each birth to one son (Eliphaz the firstborn, ver. 15, and Reuel), and Aholibamah to three (Jeush, Jaalam, and Korah). These children were born to him in Canaan. But he could no longer stay in the land of his birth. His herds and flocks were too numerous to find room, by the side of those of his brother Jacob; and he emigrated spontaneously. But this took place a very considerable time before the events related in the preceding chapter; for when Jacob returned from Mesopotamia, he sent messengers to Esau into Idumæa, and promised to visit him later in Seir. But this circumstance does not imply a contradiction. Our portion records the history of Esau as far as it relates to political power; it, therefore, goes back to the fortieth year of his life when he first married. He had then long sold his birthright; he had, no doubt, heard the prophecy given to his mother, that to his younger brother Jacob, the inheritance of the blessings of Abraham was reserved; when, therefore, his father Isaac advanced in years and became afflicted with infirmity, Jacob was regarded as the future head of the house, and as such obtained the superintendence over his father's property; the cattle of Isaac was, therefore, considered as that of Jacob; and it was within the thirty-eight years between his marriage and Jacob's flight, that Esau, at that time not inimical to his brother, left Canaan, thus willingly acknowledging the superior rights of Jacob, and spontaneously resigning his own claims upon the land. When Isaac, at the age of nearly 140 years, wished to bless his firstborn and favourite son, he sent for him to his new abodes; and Esau answered to the call, just as he came later to Canaan, at his father's death, to assist at the funeral duties.—Though Palestine was large and fertile enough later to support all the tribes of Israel, the envy of the Canaanites allowed to the family of Isaac but limited space for their nomadic pursuits, as the frequent animosities and altercations of the shepherds sufficiently prove; Canaan was to them not the land of their possession (ver. 43), but the land of their sojourning (ver. 7).

9—14. The five sons of Esau born in Canaan, increased in the mountain-land of Seir into thirteen families. This is the second great progress in the genealogy of Esau, and it is expressed in the text by a decided and clear antithesis (vers. 5 and 9). A new heading shows still more pre-

of Esau's sons; Eliphaz, the son of Adah the wife of Esau, Reuel, the son of Basemath the wife of Esau. 11. And the sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, and Gatam, and Kenaz. 12. And Timna was concubine to Eliphaz Esau's son; and she bore to Eliphaz, Amalek: these *were* the sons of Adah Esau's wife. 13. And these *were* the sons of Reuel; Nahath, and Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah: these *were* the sons of Basemath Esau's wife. 14. And these *were* the sons of Aholibamah, the daughter of Anah the daughter of Zibeon, Esau's wife: and she bore to Esau Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah.

15. These *were* dukes of the sons of Esau: the sons of Eliphaz, the firstborn *son* of Esau; duke Teman, duke

cisely the advancing development (ver. 9). A regard to lucidity of style demanded the repetition of the five sons, in order to add the more easily their offspring, although the sons of Aholibamah did not become the ancestors of new families. It is much to be deplored that our fragmentary knowledge of ancient ethnography does not enable us to identify many of the names here introduced.—The eldest son of Eliphaz is TEMAN. The Temanites formed the principal stronghold of Idumæan power; they were renowned for undaunted valour; and are, therefore, often expressly mentioned in the prophetic menaces pronounced against Edom. They enjoyed, besides, the fame of superior wisdom; and hence, no doubt, is *Eliphaz*, the *Temanite*, in the Book of Job, introduced as the wisest and the most experienced of the sufferer's friends. As to the geographical position of Teman, the Bible offers neither direct nor indirect information, except that it once mentions it in parallelism with the mountain of Paran. In the time of Jerome, there existed, five miles from Petra, a little town, Teman, in which a Roman garrison was stationed.—Besides five sons from his legal wife, Eliphaz had another son, AMALEK, from Timna, a wife of inferior rank. There is no reason to assert, that this notice is an invention suggested by the national aversion later entertained by the Israelites against the Amalekites; nor is there occasion to doubt that it embodies some historical tradition regarding the origin and earliest destinies of the latter. Though the "*territory* of the Amalekites" was mentioned in the history of Abraham (xiv. 7), the *tribe* of Amalek might have descended from Esau, and the term "Amalek is the head of nations" (Num. xxvi. 20), alludes, not to the antiquity, but to the power of that people.

15—19. The third stage of progress in Esau's house was, that the families increased into clans or tribes. Each clan was headed by a sheikh or leader; he was the chief of the tribe, and enjoyed princely power (see p. 320). We naturally expect as many "dukedoms" as there were families; and this is, in fact, on the whole, the case. However, among those sprung from the sons of Eliphaz, we find KORAH (ver. 16), although he is one of the sons of Esau and Aholibamah, and is, accordingly, likewise mentioned in his due place among the descendants of the latter (ver. 14). But this circumstance offers no material difficulty. It will be observed, that the progeny of Esau are throughout this long genealogy carefully arranged according to the three wives who gave birth to them. Adah, Aholibamah, and Basemath, are, therefore, everywhere mentioned where the

Omar, duke Zepho, duke Kenaz, 16. Duke Korah, duke Gatam, *and* Duke Amalek: these *are* the dukes *that came* of Eliphaz in the land of Edom; these *were* the sons of Adah. 17. And these *were* the sons of Reuel, Esau's son; duke Nahath, duke Zerah, duke Shammah, duke Mizzah: these *are* the dukes *that came* of Reuel in the land of Edom; these *are* the sons of Basemath Esau's wife. 18. And these *were* the sons of Aholibamah Esau's wife; duke Jeush, duke Jaalam, duke Korah: these *were* the dukes *that came* of Aholibamah the daughter of Anah, Esau's wife. 19. These *are* the sons of Esau, and these *are* their dukes: that *is* Edom.

20. These *were* the sons of Seir the Horite, who inhabited the land; Lotan, and Shobal, and Zibeon, and Anah, 21. And Dishon, and Ezer, and Dishan: these *were* the dukes of the Horites, the children of Seir in the land of Edom. 22. And the children of Lotan were Hori and

list proceeds to a new phase (vers. 10, 12, 13, 14, etc.); and their descendants represent, respectively, the Canaanite, the Horite, and the Ishmaelite elements of the Edomites. But it is not impossible that some branches of the family of Korah intermarried or otherwise associated, with some portion of the family of Eliphaz, and that they gradually rose to sufficient power and influence to form an independent clan; while the other part remained under the original division.

20—30. When Esau and his sons immigrated into Idumæa, they found these districts inhabited by more ancient nations which either coalesced with, or were extirpated by the new settlers (Deut. ii. 12). As these aboriginal tribes were, therefore, of great importance in the history of the family of Esau, they are here inserted, likewise in the form of a genealogical list. Their first ancestor was Seir, who was also the first of the HORITES or Troglodytes (see p. 225). Seir had seven sons, and, at least, one daughter, *Timna*, who is mentioned because she became famous as the mother of the Amalekites. Her name is later again inserted among the "dukes of Esau according to their families, after their places" (ver. 40); and it is not impossible that a district of Idumæa was, for some personal distinction, called with her name. The seven sons of Seir ramified into nineteen families, of which the first is that of the HORITES properly so called, undoubtedly a tribe as extensive as it is old. Zibeon, the third son of Seir, was the father of Ajah and Anah (ver. 24); while Anah, Seir's fourth son, begat Dishon and Aholibamah, the latter expressly mentioned as Esau's wife (ver. 25). As, therefore, there are two Anahs, the younger one, or the nephew, is, for better distinction, curiously described as "that Anah who found the warm springs in the desert when he fed the asses of his father Zibeon" (ver. 24). In the east of the Dead Sea, and in other parts of the desert, are indeed hot springs, some of which possess a great medicinal power; those of Calirrhoë were especially prized, and much used for various complaints (see p. 188). That such valuable discoveries have frequently been made by chance, through the medium of animals, is well-known.—

Hemam; and Lotan's sister *was* Timna. 23. And the children of Shobal *were* these; Alvan, and Manahath, and Ebal, Shepho, and Onam. 24. And these *are* the children of Zibeon; both Ajah, and Anah: this *was that* Anah who found the hot springs in the desert, when he fed the asses of Zibeon his father. 25. And the children of Anah *were* these; Dishon, and Aholibamah, the daughter of Anah. 26. And these *were* the children of Dishon; Hemdan, and Eshban, and Ithran, and Cheran. 27. The children of Ezer *were* these; Bilhan, and Zaavan, and Akan. 28. The children of Dishan *were* these; Uz, and Aran. 29. These *were* the dukes of the Horites; duke Lotan, duke Shobal, duke Zibeon, duke Anah, 30. Duke Dishon, duke Ezer, duke Dishan: these *were* the dukes of the Horites, according to their dukes in the land of Seir.

31. And these *are* the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there yet reigned a king over the children

Uz is here the son of Dishon, while, in the great table of nations, he is mentioned among the Aramæans (x. 23), and occurs also among the sons of Nahor (xxii. 21). We may conjecture that a part of the Horites, who were chiefly nomads (ver. 24), roamed north and north-eastwards in the Arabian desert, and amalgamated with the tribe of Uz, which had spread in those tracts (see p. 292).

31—39. The list then returns to the descendants of Esau. Their third phase had been their extension into dukedoms (vers. 15—19); one step only remained for them to ascend on the ladder of greatness—and they accomplished it at a comparatively early period, long before the progeny of the elected line of Jacob advanced to a similar degree of political power; *kings* ruled in Edom "before there yet reigned a king over the children of Israel" (ver. 31). Eight sovereigns are enumerated, and it cannot be denied, that this account makes the impression of a powerful and warlike state, enjoying wealth, unity, and fame. Was it, indeed, the intention of the Biblical author to draw the striking contrast between the early upstart power of the worldly Edomites and the slow but steady and progressive growth of the Israelites, who had first to pass through a long and almost hopeless period of exile, servitude, toil, and ignominy, before they were permitted to enjoy even liberty in the inhospitable and pathless desert, and who had there to undergo another period of hardship and trials before they were allowed to enter the promised land, there to commence the perilous and desperate struggle for existence and property? If this idea was indeed in the plan and composition of the writer, the much disputed and very difficult words, "before there yet reigned a king in Israel," would cause no embarrassment, as they would not necessarily point to a time later than Moses. However, this idea would here be poetical in the extreme. It would compare the power of the Edomites with the grass on the roofs of the houses, which, though suddenly sprouting up, never fills the hand of the mower, nor the girdle of the binder of the sheaves (Ps. cxxix. 6, 7); or with the reed which rapidly overtops the high and rocky pile, but which, as the roots are loose and

of Israel. 32. And Bela, the son of Beor, reigned in Edom: and the name of his city *was* Dinhabah. 33. And Bela died, and Jobab, the son of Zerah, of Bozrah, reigned in his stead. 34. And Jobab died, and Husham, of the land of the Temanites, reigned in his stead. 35. And Husham died, and Hadad, the son of Bedad, who smote Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his stead: and the name of his city *was* Avith. 36. And Hadad died, and Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his stead. 37. And Samlah died, and Saul, of Rehoboth *by* the river *Euphrates*, reigned in his stead. 38. And Saul died, and Baal-hanan, the son of

weak, may as suddenly wither, and vanish without trace (Job viii. 11—18, etc.). It is true, that though the promise of kings is included among the assurances given to the seed of Abraham (xvii. 6, 16; xxxv. 11), it is always removed into a distant future (comp. Deut. xvii. 14—20); and it is not impossible, that its realisation was intended and expected to take place considerably after the complete development of the Idumæan power; it may, further, be urged, that the chosen branches are almost invariably of later origin than the less spiritual lines; thus, Cain is older than Abel or Seth, Ishmael older than Isaac, Esau than Jacob, and, later, Manasseh than Ephraim; and as the heathen tribes were anterior in their existence, so they were precocious in their bloom and maturity. But it is highly questionable, whether such soaring and metaphorical language can be expected in the simple and purely prosaic enumerations of a genealogical table. Certain it is, that from very early times those words, "before a king yet reigned over the children of Israel," have given serious offence to many pious interpreters; they have been regarded, by some, as a later addition; induced others to reject the whole of this portion (vers. 31—39),—and have by others, who supposed they were written in the time of Moses, been given up as hopelessly lost to intelligible explanation. But those who start from the principle of prophetic inspiration, will have no difficulty in explaining that phrase; they will at once admit, that it points to the time of the Hebrew monarchy; they will insist, that this is the impression which the unbiassed examination of the text unavoidably produces; that an allusion to a Hebrew king may indeed prophetically be made even before the immigration of the Israelites into Canaan, and about four centuries before the time of Saul; but that, in a simple *historical* style, such statement is not only preposterous, but impossible.

Seven of the kings are more exactly described with regard to their native places. But here a decided distinction is discoverable; some are mentioned with the addition: "and the name of his town was"; whereas others are introduced as "coming from": the former class seems to comprise native Idumæans; the latter, though not in all instances, such foreigners who were admitted to the supreme power. For, as not one is the son of his predecessor, nor two take their origin from the same place, though all are expressly stated to have died a natural, no violent death, it has been supposed with great probability, that the Idumæan monarchy was elective; to which we may add, that the choice was limited to a certain number of the more powerful tribes, from which perhaps a monarch was appointed by rotation; it is not impossible, that these were the dukedoms mentioned in the last portion of this chapter; and hence we may understand that, though the kingdom was elective, some could be said to belong to the "seed of

Achbor, reigned in his stead. 39. And Baal-hanan the son of Achbor died, and Hadar reigned in his stead: and the name of his city *is* Pau; and his wife's name *is* Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Me-zahab.

40. And these *are* the names of the dukes *that came* of Esau, according to their families, after their places, by their names; duke Timna, duke Alvah, duke Jetheth, 41. Duke Aholibamah, duke Elah, duke Pinon, 42. Duke Kenaz, duke Teman, duke Mibzar, 43. Duke Magdiel, duke Iram: these *are* the dukes of Edom, according to

royalty" of Edom (1 Ki. xi. 14), and might raise a legitimate claim to the throne.—The first king was *Bela*, the son of Beor, "and the name of his city was *Dinhabah*." It appears, then, that the towns where the elected monarchs were born or had settled, were raised to the temporary capitals of the land; thus we have, besides, the residence-towns Avith (ver. 35), and Pau (ver. 39).—The second king, *Jobab*, was from Bozrah. An Idumæan city of this name is constantly mentioned by the prophets as possessing the greatest political importance; and if we compare the passages in which it is alluded to, it seems indisputable that it was situated in Idumæa Proper, or the mountain-land of Seir, the chief seat of Edom; and it is once coupled with Teman (Am. i. 12).—Rehoboth, on the river *Euphrates*, has been identified, though without sufficient reasons, with "the town Rehoboth," mentioned among the settlements of Asshur (x. 11; see p. 179); and the king there born has the Shemitic name of Saul. The last monarch, perhaps the contemporary of the author (for he does not, as in all other instances, add "and he died"), is described with particular accuracy as regards his family connections; for the name of his wife is recorded, together with that of her father and grand-father.

40—43. It was impossible for the house of Edom to ascend higher; it had reached the most exalted degree of national power; it had grown from an individual into families, then into tribes or dukedoms, and later into a well-organised monarchy, governed by kings, who owed their elevation to their personal virtue and ability, and from whose valour the safety of the land in times of war could be reasonably expected (ver. 35). In this state, the Edomites remained till their petulance and rapacity occasioned the decay of their prosperity and their final subjection. But though this decline had been anticipated in the *prophecy* that "the elder should serve the younger" (xxv. 23; xxvii. 40); the *historical* account does not allude to an event lying far beyond the period comprised in the Pentateuch; and when the Israelites, on their march to Palestine, approached the territory of the Idumæans, they were commanded not to attack them; "for they would not receive as much as a foot-breadth of their land, because Mount Seir was given to Esau for a possession" (Deut. ii. 5; comp. Numb. xx. 14—21). The last part of our list cannot, therefore, apply to a time later than that of the independent monarchy, with which it is, in fact, contemporary; for it enumerates the dukedoms or tribes from which the king could be elected, and which possessed, therefore, the greatest material power or political influence. But the heading with which this portion begins, and the summary remark with which it concludes, contain the terms: "after their places" and "after their habitations," or "in the

their habitations in the land of their possession: this *is* Esau the father of the Edomites.

land of their possession," terms avoided in all preceding parts, appearing, therefore, to be characteristic of this section, and proving that the geographical divisions of the country, rather than the ethnological relations of the people, are here stated; but we cannot be surprised to find again some of the preceding names (Timna, Aholibamah, and Kenaz), as it is but natural to designate a district after the chief tribe that inhabits it.—Thus, however varied the contents of this chapter may appear, they are arranged with admirable regularity, after a pre-conceived plan, and in a progressive order; nor does the historian leave his subject without impressing the reader with its high political interest (ver. 43).

IV.—THE HISTORY OF JOSEPH AND THE SETTLEMENT OF JACOB'S FAMILY IN EGYPT.

CHAPTERS XXXVII. TO XLVII.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

SUMMARY.—Joseph was hated and envied by his brothers on account of the preference shown to him by Jacob, and on account of his ambitious dreams, which he freely related. When they intended to kill him, he was saved by the interference of Reuben, and, in his seventeenth year, given up at Dothan to Midianite merchants, who brought him to Egypt, and sold him to Potiphar, the chief of Pharaoh's guard. Jacob, who was made to believe that Joseph was torn by a wild beast was inconsolably overwhelmed with sorrow and grief.

1. And Jacob dwelt in the land wherein his father was

1. Esau had degraded the dignity, and defiled the purity, of his descent by intermarrying with the Canaanites and the Horites; he had thereby rendered an association with the fraternal tribe of the Israelites impossible; and he almost ratified this perpetual separation by a voluntary departure from Canaan, and by his settlement in districts to which civilization could scarcely penetrate, and where daring valour in the sanguinary engagements of war or robbery passed as supreme virtue. Henceforth the Edomites are not mentioned in the Scriptures, except when they came into conflict or contact with the Hebrews; but the latter never forgot the close relationship of blood by which they were allied with them; they facilitated their admission into the congregation of the Lord (Deut. xxiii. 9, 10), although it does not appear that the wild inhabitants of mount Seir ever showed much readiness to enter the covenant of peace, or much aptitude to understand its spiritual doctrines.

The author is, therefore, now enabled to devote his undivided attention to the history of the chosen race; he returns at once to the narrative of Jacob's life which he had for a moment interrupted, to insert Esau's rising greatness (xxxv. 27); and he resumes it with the notice that Jacob lived as a stranger, at Hebron, in the land where his father also had only been tolerated as a sojourner. *Ten* years had elapsed since his return from Mesopotamia. After the dangers on his way homeward, several grave misfortunes had befallen him;

a stranger, in the land of Canaan. 2. These *are* the generations of Jacob. When Joseph *was* seventeen years old, he was feeding the flock with his brothers; and he *was* a lad with the sons of Bilhah and with the sons of Zilpah,

the catastrophe at Shechem, the death of his wife Rachel in a comparatively youthful age, and the incestuous act of his firstborn son, had deeply distressed him; yet all these trials, though perhaps in themselves as grievous and calamitous, had not depressed his mind so completely, nor tested his moral strength so severely, as the affliction which then awaited him. For he was still in the third epoch of his life, that of atonement by suffering, from which he could not be exempted, though he belonged to the favoured family of God.

2, 3. From this reason the tale of Joseph's changeful destinies appears as a part of the history of *Jacob*; the former constitutes the necessary completion and the unavoidable consequence of the latter; the patriarch's failings, not yet expiated, were to be punished by domestic misery; and the eldest son of Rachel, to whom he was attached with all the warmest feelings of a paternal heart, was chosen as the medium of his final correction.

This consideration alone suffices to show that the history of Joseph is designed as something more than an individual biography; the exquisite charm of this absorbing story has too naturally caused its deeper meaning, and its relation to the organism of the Book of Genesis, to be more or less neglected. It offers, indeed, a psychological picture, excelled by few ancient or modern productions in exactness, truthfulness, and riveting interest; as a composition, it might, indeed, be the pride of the general literature of any nation; it is as fascinating in the arrangement of facts, as it is powerful in the description of emotions; and it has, therefore, in all ages, and among nations of vastly different tastes and capacities, found the warmest admiration; it has been enriched by numberless legends; almost every incident was embellished by the fertile imagination of Rabbinical and Mohammedan writers; and it was ultimately developed into an elaborate romance, replete with wonderful features and surprising events. However, this powerful external interest forms the least merit of a narrative, designed, not as a literary but a religious production, calculated to enforce lessons of the very highest moment for the philosophy of religion, and carrying a fundamental doctrine a most decided step onward. In the preceding portions, the attribute of God as a ruling Providence has appeared as scarcely more than the necessary consequence of God as *the Creator*; they show that, as His power has brought forth the universe, so His love protects it and watches over its preservation; in a word, it is the *universal Providence* which they mirror forth. But in the events of Joseph's career, we see everywhere the *special Providence* of God guarding the *individual;* the extraordinary incidents of his life, however strange and fantastical they appear, are regulated upon a preconceived plan; they are, from the beginning, under the powerful supervision of the Divine Ruler; and they form but so many steps leading to his final and glorious exaltation. The interest awakened by Joseph's history is perfectly *personal;* he arouses sympathy, not merely because he is the descendant of Abraham, but because he is the object of the marvellous care of Providence; he makes us sometimes even forget how he is connected with the progress of the chosen family, and that his life is but a dependent link in that of Jacob.

As the just appreciation of Joseph's character is of primary importance for the correct understanding of the following portions, it is necessary attentively to consider every hint and allusion of the text. He was a youth, seventeen years old, when

his father's wives: and Joseph brought to their father evil reports about them. 3. And Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he *was* the son of his old age: and he made him a long and costly robe. 4. And when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him, and could not speak

he accompanied the sons of Bilhah, Dan and Naphtali, and of Zilpah, Gad and Asher, and went with them to the pastures; his tender age, in the opinion of the affectionate father, seemed to require that he should be committed to the care of the elder brothers; thus he became necessarily acquainted with their words and deeds; and whatever struck him as remarkable, he reported to his father. From this circumstance it has not unfrequently been inferred, that he was an informer, a malicious calumniator, or a base flatterer, wishing to ingratiate himself in his father's favour by a hypocritical affectation of virtue. But nothing would be more erroneous. Jacob listened to Joseph's "evil reports," and—*loved him more than all his sons.* Enabled to study characters, alike by long experience and natural shrewdness, he was eminently fit to discover the spirit of Joseph's accounts; and had he detected a vile motive, his heart would have turned from the slanderer; for he had himself thoroughly completed his moral purification. Further, the general conduct of the brothers was such as to let unfavourable statements appear at least as no deceitful fabrications. And, lastly, depravity and meanness are totally at variance with those noble qualities of Joseph's mind, which we shall soon have opportunities to unfold, and which alone could make him the worthy medium of the great plans of Providence. Too young to listen to prudence, and too generous to regard expediency, his pure and susceptible mind repeated in harmless innocence what passed among his brothers; and open and communicative, he knew no artificial reserve. He, therefore, is not even liable to the reproach of carelessness; for he would have seen no wrong in his conduct, even had his attention been directed to it; following the unrestricted impulses of his nature, he had not yet commenced to reflect upon his feelings, or to control and direct his emotions. — But was it not blameable on the part of Jacob, so decidedly to prefer one son to all the others? Ought not a father to bestow an equal share of affection upon all his children? This question is but partially to be answered in the affirmative. Certainly, the *natural* love of a father, which is the result of the close relationship, is very generally equally ardent towards all his children; he will, with the greatest sacrifices, support, educate, and protect all his offspring. But another affection, based upon esteem or internal affinity of characters, may be superadded to the natural love, as will frequently be the case with parents of strongly-marked mental or moral organisation; and thus that love is produced which is the emancipation from the blind rule of instinct, and consists in the prevalence of reason and moral liberty. And if it is not reprehensible in a father to feel more strongly for the children in whom he finds his own existence more distinctly renewed, or who are more susceptible of culture and refinement, it can, at the utmost, only be deemed an imprudence if the predilection is *manifested* before the less beloved children. But though it is no moral offence, it may become a source of envy, strife, and domestic discord. This truth was neglected by Jacob when he made for his favoured son Joseph a long and costly robe. The ample and folding garments of persons of wealth and distinction were not seldom composed of, or covered with, pieces of various costly stuffs, tastefully arranged—ambitious vestments, well calculated to account for the feelings of animosity on the part of Joseph's brothers. The Egyptian monuments, so minute in the illustration of every day life, represent such aris-

friendly to him.—5. And Joseph dreamt a dream, and he told *it* to his brothers: and they hated him still more. 6. And he said to them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamt; 7. For, behold, we *were* binding sheaves in the field, and, behold, my sheaf rose, and indeed stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round

tocratic robes with great distinctness, showing the many pieces of which they consisted.

4. The partiality of Jacob in favour of Joseph ought to have been a hint and a warning to his other sons, and to have reminded them that Joseph was preferred not merely because "he was the son of Jacob's old age" (for the difference of years was not considerable), but because he surpassed them in goodness and purity. But on the contrary, it exercised a fatal effect upon their minds. For it appears, that their nature was bent upon violence and malice, which they had once before manifested in the sanguinary revenge of their sister. But just as, in Shechem, two of them only had *persevered* in their atrocious design, while the others, with a more susceptible conscience, recoiled from its fearful execution; so we shall again find, in the history of Joseph, that not all were equally corrupted; but that, though the meanest feelings had taken root in the hearts of some, a few at least proved alike worthy to be the descendants of the pious Abraham, and to become the ancestors of a holy people.

5—11. The brilliant reward which awaited Joseph's moral excellence was foreshadowed to him by dreams. But his greatness is in no part of our narrative regarded as an *election by Divine grace.* Although a most momentous agent in the hands of Providence, he owed his elevation to exemplary virtue, the natural result of the faith inherited from his father and his sire. He was not intended to receive and to teach any *new religious truth;* his mission was the *physical and material* preservation of his family; he was designed to deliver them from impending want, and to secure for them abodes where they might grow and increase till the moral and political dissolution of the Amorites would enable them to conquer Canaan. Between Jacob and Moses the development of religious truth made no advance; it was sufficient if but the true import of the name *Israel* was preserved among the Hebrews, till they would be capable of fathoming the deep meaning of the sacred and sublime name *Jehovah.* Therefore Joseph never received a Divine revelation or supernatural vision; the incidents of his life, however marvellous and eventful, appear to have happened in the ordinary course and connection of events; and they did not directly contribute to promote the highest and exclusive aim of Israel, the propagation of faith and truth. Hence the dreams of Joseph are no *visions;* they are certainly intended as Divine communications, but not more so than all other dreams were held to be; and if they have any peculiar characteristic, it is that *both* point to the same future event, which identity was deemed a sure guarantee of their ultimate realization. Yet a clear progress is observable in the two dreams. The first refers to the brothers only, the second includes the parents also. Hence Joseph relates the former to his brothers alone, the latter to his father besides. The one moves in a terrestrial, the other in a heavenly sphere; the former, therefore, typifies only Joseph's wealth and worldly position, the latter promises eternal fame and universal homage; for sheaves of corn are an emblem of a prosperous and peaceful life spent in comfort (Job v. 26); while the heavenly bodies are the symbols of dominion and imperishable renown. But the *propriety* of the dreams cannot be doubted. Though the sons of Jacob led the life of cattle-breeding nomads, they might, like

about, and prostrated themselves before my sheaf. 8. And his brothers said to him, Wilt thou indeed reign over us? wilt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him still more on account of his dreams and on account of his words. 9. And he dreamt yet another dream, and told it to his brothers, and said, Behold, I have dreamt a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and eleven stars prostrated themselves before me. 10. And he told *it* to his father and to his brothers: and his father rebuked him, and said to him, What *is* this dream which thou hast dreamt? Shall I and thy mother and thy brothers indeed come to prostrate ourselves before thee to the ground? 11. And his brothers envied him; but his father guarded the words.—12. And his brothers went to feed their father's flock in Shechem. 13. And Israel said to Joseph, Do not thy brothers feed *the flocks*

Isaac, at the same time have cultivated the soil; and even had they never themselves bound sheaves, their sojourn in agricultural districts must have made them familiar with harvest-scenes. On the other hand, men accustomed to astronomical observations, and living among astrological tribes, naturally compared a couple and their twelve sons with the two larger heavenly orbs, and the twelve signs of the zodiac; the more so, as the sun and the moon were, in several ancient mythologies, represented as husband and wife (for instance, Osiris and Isis, Baal and Ashtarte), and as a family was sometimes poetically compared with the starred heavens.

Though Joseph related these dreams in the simplicity of his heart and with an innocent joy, he did not consider them as idle delusions of an excited imagination; he ascribed to them a certain reality; he communicated the last dream only to his father, because he saw in this one alone an allusion to him, a sufficient proof that he reflected on their meaning and possible effect; he was, no doubt, as much delighted in pourtraying to himself a dazzling future, as his brothers abhorred the thought. But though his fancy was roused into a vivid play, his heart remained pure from guilt; he did not become vain, haughty, or covetous; and he listened without murmuring to the severe reproof of his father, who reminded him, that on the one hand, the fulfilment of his dreams was impossible, since his mother, Rachel, lived no more; and that, on the other hand, it would be perversity to foster such presumptuous and arrogant hopes. Jacob, however, though rebuking his son, faithfully remembered the dreams; for he was well aware that the discrepancy which he had pointed out regarding Rachel was of no great moment: both dreams represent the submission of the *whole family* under the authority of Joseph; and while, in the first, the brothers alone compose the family, the second adds, for greater completeness, the parents also, who thus help to *symbolise* the "house of Jacob."

12—24. Twice had the brothers now been warned to search their conduct and their sentiments, and to reform both; but, as with all ill-regulated minds, the means of correction proved with them causes of increased obduracy. The distinction shown to Joseph by their father roused their *hatred* (ver. 4); while his dreams,

in Shechem? Come, and I will send thee to them. And he said to him, Here *am* I. 14. And he said to him, Go, I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brothers and well with their flocks, and bring me word again. So he sent him from the valley of Hebron, and he came to Shechem. 15. And a man found him, and, behold, *he was* wandering in the field: and the man asked him, saying, What dost thou seek? 16. And he said, I seek my brothers: tell me, I pray thee, where they feed *their flocks*. 17. And the man said, They are departed hence; for I heard *them* say, Let us go to Dothan. And Joseph went after his brothers, and he found them in Dothan. 18. And when they saw him at a distance, and before he came near to them, they conspired against him to kill him. 19. And they said one to another, Behold, that dreamer cometh. 20. Come now, therefore, and let us

which promised him splendour of property and position, kindled their *envy* (ver. 11); and they saw in him nothing but the meddling reporter and the ambitious schemer. The way to every crime was paved; their minds had received the poisonous seeds, and the soil was prepared to mature them.

From the valley of Hebron, where Jacob was then residing (ver. 14), they had gone with their flocks northwards to the neighbourhood of Shechem, perhaps to the fields which their father had some time since bought from the inhabitants (xxxiii. 19); and they proceeded thither without fearing the revenge of the Shechemites, because, at least, two or three years had elapsed since the slaughter committed by Simeon and Levi. They might have been absent for a longer time than usual; Jacob, therefore, desirous to enquire after them and the cattle, sent Joseph, whom he had that time kept at home. An unknown stranger directed him to Dothan. This place was destined to mark a chief epoch in Joseph's eventful life; and it was every way calculated to serve this purpose. Dothan was situated on the great caravan track from Gilead to Egypt, in narrow mountain paths, leading from Judæa to the middle and northern parts of Palestine, in the vicinity of Esdraëlon and Bethshan or Scythopolis, about twelve Roman miles north of Samaria; and it is the scene of one of the greatest miracles of the prophet Elisha.—When the brothers saw Joseph approach, their inveterate feelings of jealousy were suddenly and strongly roused; his dreams had sunk deep into their envious hearts; they designated him as *the dreamer*, with the mingled emotions of hatred, contempt, and rancour; they trembled at the possible realization of his hopes; but as they knew that dreams were Divine predictions, their aversion against Joseph amounted to revolt and obstinacy against God; they attempted to overthrow the decree of Providence, because it implied their own humiliation; they schemed a wicked plan to gain that end, and then insolently exclaimed, "thus let us see what will become of his dreams." For one moment a regard for their aged father caused a scruple in their minds; but men who defied God, could not be long in silencing the faint warnings of conscience; anxious only to preserve

slay him, and cast him into one of the pits, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams. 21. And Reuben heard *it*, and he delivered him out of their hands, and said, Let us not kill him. 22. And Reuben said to them, Shed no blood; cast him into this pit which *is* in the desert, but lay no hand upon him:—that he might deliver him

the appearance of virtue, they did not shrink from a heinous atrocity, which they deemed the pretext that "a wild beast had devoured him," sufficiently plausible to cover. But as it was not fated that Joseph should perish, one among the brothers, at least, was awakened to a sense of his duty. The eldest had the supervision over his younger brothers, and he was responsible for their conduct and safety. Reuben, therefore, knew that Jacob would demand the lost son from *his* hands; and though he had before proved himself incapable of mastering a criminal passion, he was in this emergency both dutiful and intelligent: the silent reproach of his father, on the former occasion, had produced a lasting effect upon him (p. 399). He saw too well that his brothers were so impetuously bent upon destroying Joseph, that an appeal to the highest laws of morality would have been in vain; but he was also aware that they as eagerly strove to uphold the semblance of honour; and he made a proposal alike effectual for his own plans and satisfactory to the feelings of his brothers. He persuaded them that it would not be prudent to shed blood, for murder would call down upon them the fearful revenge of the nearest relatives; they might gain their end by a safer expedient, which would release them from all external reproach. At once approving of the judicious advice, they stripped Joseph of his costly garment, the fatal gift of his father, threw him into the empty cistern pointed out by Reuben, and as if they had achieved a glorious victory, and had been relieved from a harassing anxiety, they sat down to a convivial repast.

25. From very early times, a lively caravan trade was entertained between Syria and the east-jordanic provinces on the one hand, and Egypt on the other; it brought the esteemed products of Arabia and the wares and merchandises of eastern Asia into the land of the Pharaohs; and in the course of time, the importation was conducted with all possible regularity, and on lines prudently chosen and marked out. We find, that so early as the sixteenth dynasty, stations were formed, temples erected, and wells dug and protected, in the Arabian Desert, for the benefit of those who had occasion to pass through it in their commercial travels. Egypt had at that period, already attained a great measure of the civilisation of which it was capable; it enjoyed a strong government and well organised public institutions; and the political and social relations were regulated on a firm basis. This sense of security favoured the development of comfort and luxury; the higher castes especially appreciated all that delights and embellishes life; their wants increased in an incredible degree; and they encouraged every undertaking which promised to gratify them. Among the articles in peculiar demand were all varieties of spicery and perfumes, required not only for the feasts and pleasures of the living, but for the embalming of the dead: the mummies generally emitted so delicious a fragrance that they were for generations kept in the houses of the relatives, arranged along the walls, and then only entombed; which practice, however, received, no doubt, its first impulse from the devoted love bestowed in Egypt on departed parents and relatives. The amount of spicery consumed for all these purposes, was neces-

out of their hands, to bring him back to his father. 23. And when Joseph was come to his brothers, they stripped Joseph of his robe, the long and costly robe that *was* upon him. 24. And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit *was* empty, *there was* no water in it. 25. And they sat down to eat a meal: and they lifted up their eyes, and looked, and, behold, a company of Ishmaelites

sarily immense; and the caravan introduced in our narrative was exclusively laden with those costly commodities. The men who conducted it, were Midianites (vers. 28, 36), a tribe partly nomadic, but partly actively engaged in commerce. But as the Ishmaelites commanded by far the greatest part of the caravan trade, all those who carried on the same pursuits, were designated by their name. — The Midianites carried with them three articles.

1. The first (*nechoth*) defies almost every attempt at identification, as neither the ancient versions nor the kindred dialects afford any reliable clue. It is undoubtedly a kind of spice, found in Arabia, Gilead, and Palestine; and it may, with some probability, be compared to the similar Arabic word, which denotes the red flowers of the plant *thortsutsun*, resembling the amaranth, so that it would be the *gummi tragacanthæ*, which, in the summer months, exudes spontaneously from the stem and the boughs of the *Astragalus tragacantha*, a thorny shrub with lanceolate leaves; which is white, seldom yellow or brown, hard, inodorous and tasteless, but highly valued on account of its medicinal properties; and which is not only found in Persia, Armenia, Greece, and Crete, but in Syria and on Mount Lebanon, where it is not seldom collected by shepherds.

2. *Balsam*, a native product of Palestine, is mentioned among the articles which Israel and Judah brought to the markets of Tyre; it was efficaciously used as an ointment for the cure of wounds by means of bandages, and was, for that purpose, eagerly bought by the Egyptians; but it was most abundantly found in Gilead, which appears to have been considered as its chief home. But from which plant the balm was obtained, we are again unable to determine, especially as the descriptions of ancient writers, who seem to have seen and examined it themselves, differ in some principal points from the balsam-trees at present known. Pliny and other historians call the balsamum a plant which nature has bestowed upon Judæa alone; although Diodorus Siculus ascribes it to Arabia also, from whence it was transplanted to Egypt; Bruce found one species abundantly in the vicinity of Babelmandeb, where the wood alone is used for fuel; and others have, not long since, discovered one in the East Indies also. It was, in Palestine, cultivated in two gardens in the vicinity of Jericho, which the Jews, in their last national war, did not give up without an obstinate combat, and, perhaps, round Engedi also. From those gardens, Vespasianus and Titus took and exhibited specimens in Rome as a very interesting curiosity; and the careful cultivation of the plant proved a source of considerable public revenue. It bears, according to Pliny, a much stronger resemblance to the vine than to the myrtle; it is planted, grafted, and treated like the former; and its seeds resemble in flavour that of wine; it grows with great rapidity, and bears fruit at the end of three years; it is an evergreen, and its leaves, though not abundant, are very much like those of the rue; it attains the height of about two yards; the blossoms are white, similar to those of the acacia, odoriferous, and arranged in clusters of three. It occurs in three varieties of different value: the *rough-barked*, with plentiful branches and a strong odour; the *tall* species, with a smooth, even bark; and

came from Gilead with their camels bearing tragacanth, and balsam, and ladanum, going to carry *it* down to Egypt.— 26. And Judah said to his brothers, What profit *is it* if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood? 27. Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not

the third, with thin and hair-like foliage. The better and larger grains of the seed are of a reddish colour, while the inferior sort is lighter and of a greener hue; they are unctuous to the touch, and become odoriferous by friction. The incisions in the reddish branches, which may be repeated three times every summer, must be made very carefully and lightly, with glass or stone knives; for the application of iron instruments, except for pruning, is fatal to the plant. The juice, *opobalsamum*, which thus distils out in very small drops, is most patiently collected in wool, deposited in small horns, and then placed in new earthen vessels. It is of very sweet odour, of a white colour when fresh, whereas the worst quality is black, and turns rancid when old; it has the appearance of a thick oil, but gradually becomes red and loses its transparency when hardening. The best sort is that which is produced before the formation of the seed. The price at which it was sold in Alexander's time, was double its weight in silver; but in the time of Pliny, a sextarius of balsamum cost three hundred denarii. It was in equal request as a perfume and as a pharmaceutic drug for external diseases. The bark also was applied for various medicinal purposes; and the cuttings, or "the wood of balsam" (*xylobalsamum*), were boiled for unguents, and formed a very lucrative article of commerce (they were sold at six denarii per pound); and in the fifth year after the conquest of Palestine, they brought into the public exchequer the sum of 800,000 sesterces. Scarcely anything except such decoction, though that not even in a genuine form, ever reaches Europe; it is known under the name of "balm of Mecca," and resembles in smell rosmarine and citron.—The balsam was often adulterated with various other ingredients, as honey, oil of roses, of turpentine, and of myrtle; immense profits were realised by these frauds; but several tests of its genuineness were known to the ancients.—The balsam-tree may have been imported into Palestine either from Gilead or from Arabia; in the former case, it survived in the adopted soil the same plant in its native districts; for, in later times, it was no more found in Gilead. But Josephus states, that the queen of Sheba brought the first root of the balsam-tree to Palestine as a present to king Solomon (comp. 1 Ki. x. 10).

3. *Ladanum*, later called *stobolon*, is indigenous in Arabia and Spain, in Cyprus and Carmania, was subsequently found in Syria and Africa also, and is, at present, chiefly imported from Greece and the Greek islands. It is gathered from an odoriferous shrub, called by the ancients *leda* or *ledon*, corresponding to the *Cistus creticus* of Linnæus (the Oak-rose), about two feet high, with lanceolate leaves, smooth, and dark-green on the upper, and white on the nether side, with dark-red blossoms, and a nearly circular seed-cup; some species occur in Palestine also, and the *Cistus roseus* has, not without probability, been identified with the celebrated rose of Sharon, where the *Cistus* abounds, but no true rose is found. The ladanum itself is said to have been accidentally discovered through goats which, cropping the sprouting shoots of the branches, made the sweet liquid juice which they contain drop upon "the shaggy hairs of their unlucky beard," where it was mingled with the dust, formed knots and tufts, and, after having been combed out, was dried by the sun; and thus, "though itself most fragrant, it comes from a place quite the reverse of odoriferous." But it is now generally beaten from the shrub by means of a kind of whip furnished with thongs, which, when filled with the sticky

our hand be upon him; for he *is* our brother, our flesh. And his brothers listened *to him.* 28. And when the Midianite merchants passed by, they [the brothers] drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty *shekels* of silver: and they

resin, are scraped with a knife. — Two kinds of ladanum are generally known, the *natural* sort, friable, and mingled with earth; the other *artificial*, black, of a viscous nature, and soft to the fingers, though dry and parched in appearance. The best quality was, in the first century of the present era, sold at forty asses per pound; it has a strong and acrid smell, redolent of its native desert regions; and burns with a brilliant flame. But both sorts were medicinally used to arrest relaxation, and, either alone or mixed with other ingredients, applied for various other smaller or greater disorders.

26—28. Joseph's brothers, though stained with the vices of envy and jealousy, which indeed incited them to criminal enormities, were yet not altogether depraved. In the midst of their meal they were haunted by the idea of the wretched lot they had prepared for their innocent brother; and when they saw the caravan of the Midianites approach, they were struck by a thought to which the eloquent Judah gave expression. He reminded them that they had abstained from *slaying* Joseph, lest they should be guilty of bloodshed; but that the expedient to which they had resorted, was yet but another form of murder, only that in this case the "blood was concealed." And though also alluding to the external dangers in which the contemplated deed would involve them, he urged, with particular emphasis, that Joseph was "their brother and their own flesh." This appeal touched the better chords of their minds, and they readily consented to the proposal to draw Joseph from the cistern, and to sell him to the passing merchants. From a state of transitory levity, they had risen to the level of their own nature; but they could not summon sufficient moral energy to pass beyond it, and to crush their infatuating passions. For twenty shekels, a price less than that ordinarily paid for a Hebrew slave, they delivered up a brother, like an article of merchandise, into the hands of strange traders, to be carried off to an inhospitable country. They could see this without a pang of conscience. But they were not aware that they thus themselves materially promoted the events which it had been their anxious desire to avert; they were instruments in the hands of the Divine power, unconscious agents in the decrees of Divine wisdom (comp. Ps. cv. 17—22). And how did Joseph bear his lamentable condition? He had been helplessly exposed in the pit, with the fearful death of starvation before him; he was now in the power of gain-seeking merchants; and an uncertain and, perhaps, ignominious fate clouded the future; he was torn from the side of his affectionate father; or, as Luther pathetically describes it, he perhaps passed Hebron with the caravan; cast a glance of nameless grief towards the tents in which Jacob dwelt and was soon to mourn; he passed, but was not permitted once more to enter the cherished dwelling or to embrace his loving father. This was, indeed, a position full of sorrow and despair; but Joseph was strengthened to endure it by the prophetic dreams which had assured him of a glorious destiny (comp. xlii. 9), and in the fulfilment of which he was encouraged to believe the more firmly, when he was unexpectedly drawn from the solitary cistern and placed into the hands of the Midianites; he felt deeply, that a mission awaited him, and that he would not be allowed to perish before he had accomplished it.— Thus Joseph wandered to Egypt, as his father Jacob had before proceeded to Mesopotamia. Both commenced their career in the strange land as slaves; but the one escaped from Mesopotamia in

brought Joseph into Egypt.—29. And Reuben returned to the pit; and, behold, Joseph *was* not in the pit; and he rent his clothes. 30. And he returned to his brothers, and said, The child *is* not *there*, and I, whither shall I go? —31. And they took Joseph's robe, and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the robe in the blood; 32. And they sent the long and costly robe, and they brought *it* to their father; and said, This have we found: recognise now whether it *be* thy son's robe or not. 33. And he recognised it, and said, *It is* my son's robe; an evil beast

secret flight, while the other ended his days in Egypt, respected almost as a sovereign, and revered as a rescuer; and his descendants left the land "with a raised hand." The Hebrews sprang from the districts between the Euphrates and Tigris; but they grew into a numerons nation in Egypt, where they settled under tempting circumstances: these are the historical facts embodied in the lives of Jacob and Joseph.

29—35. Reuben had not been present when Joseph was sold to the Midianites; he had evidently left his brothers to watch a favourable opportunity for taking the youth from the cistern to which they had consigned him by his advice; but when he found him there no more, he thought, with trembling and horror, of Jacob, who would make him responsible for the missing son; and he hastened to pour out his lamentations before his brothers. But when Jacob recognised Joseph's garment steeped in blood, and broke forth in every vehement form and expression of despair, the hardened minds of his sons were at last moved; even the picture of Joseph, helplessly given up to unfeeling strangers, returned with greater vividness before their eyes; they felt then already what they later pronounced with bitter stings of repentance: "we are verily guilty concerning our brother; for we saw the anguish of his soul when he implored us, and we would not hear"; and they were prepared for the deserved punishment. But their endeavours to soothe Jacob's affliction were unavailing; he exclaimed with nameless sorrow: "Indeed I shall go down to my son into the grave mourning"; nor did Time appear to have a balm for his grief which, even after the lapse of many years, often broke forth in unabated violence. But none of the brothers disclosed to him Joseph's real fate; they felt that the loss of one son would be infinitely more excruciating to him if he knew that it was caused by the crime of his other children; nor did they make any exertion to follow Joseph's trace, and, if possible, to restore him to the paternal roof; they also accustomed themselves to consider him as dead, and always spoke of him as of one no more among the living: they tried to silence the tumultuous voice of conscience; but later it was heard with a force overpowering and terrible.

36. Joseph was sold into the house of the "chief of the executioners," evidently an official of high position and great public authority. The nature of his office may be inferred from the facts that he was the overseer of the great state prison, which was in his own house; that he was sometimes charged with important military duties, as Nebuzaradan, who, on the command of Nebuchadnezzar, marched, with a part of the Babylonian army, against Jerusalem, which he took and destroyed; and that on such occasions he exercised very extensive political and administrative power. He had to watch that the extreme punishment ordered by the king, or demanded by the law, was duly inflicted; and had, in many cases, to per-

hath devoured him: surely Joseph is torn in pieces. 34. And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son a long time. 35. And all his sons and all his daughters rose to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, Indeed, I shall go down into the grave to my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him.—36. And the Midianites sold him into Egypt, to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, chief of the guard.

form the execution himself. He was, at the same time, the chief of the guard entrusted with the protection of the royal person; and upon him devolved a variety of public and secret functions, either for the maintenance of the law or the gratification of his master's caprice. His position has, therefore, justly been compared with that of the Kapijji-bashy, at the modern Turkish court.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

SUMMARY.—Judah became, by the daughter of Shuah, a Canaanite of the town Adullam, successively the father of Er, Onan, and Shelah. In due time he gave Tamar as a wife to his eldest son; and when the latter, on account of his wickedness, died without children, he gave her to his second son, that he might preserve his brother's name by offspring. But when Onan frustrated this hope by immoral conduct, God killed him also. Now Judah refused, as custom and duty demanded, to marry his third son to Tamar, who, to secure children, ensnared Judah himself, and became by him the mother of Perez and Zerah.

1. And it was at that time, that Judah went down from his brothers, and turned in to an Adullamite, whose name *was* Hirah. 2. And Judah saw there the daughter of a

1—5. Jacob was still bemoaning the loss of his favourite son, when another of his children caused him new and bitter sorrow by conduct unexampled in his house. The trials rapidly succeeded each other, that they might the more strikingly appear as punishments and expiations. They belong essentially and necessarily to the history or the "generations" of Jacob (xxxvii. 2); they do not interrupt, but complete and illustrate, the connection of the narrative; they are the unavoidable consequences of the past. As long as Jacob was in Mesopotamia, he was regarded only as a member of Isaac's house; whence his destinies during that protracted period are recorded as a part of Isaac's history (xxv. 19). But when he returned to Hebron, and became, even during his father's lifetime, the chief of the family, his independent supremacy began, and his own history includes that of Joseph and of his other sons as a subordinate link. The reflecting reader, applying this idea to the lives of Isaac and Jacob, will be surprised by another admirable feature of the economy pervading the book of Genesis.—The narrative having arrived at a certain conclusion, after relating how Joseph was removed from Canaan under circumstances which seemed to involve his destruction, or at least to render the realisation of his ambitious dreams for ever impossible, could here appropriately pause, to insert a story important in its remote consequences.

Canaanite whose name *was* Shuah; and he took her, and went to her. 3. And she conceived, and bore a son; and he called his name Er. 4. And she conceived again, and bore a son; and she called his name Onan. 5. And she yet again bore a son, and she called his name Shelah: and he was at Chezib when she bore him.— 6. And Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, and her name *was* Tamar. 7. And Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the eyes of the Lord; and the Lord killed him. 8. And Judah said to Onan, Go to thy brother's wife, and marry

There occurred in Judah's family disgraceful scenes, from which the mind turns with disgust and indignation, but which are related with a minuteness and unreserved openness, imposing the duty of searching for their deeper import. Judah had taken to wife the daughter of a Canaanite, no doubt to the grief and regret of his father (comp. xxvi. 35); he had done what hitherto every member of the chosen branches of Abraham's house had scrupulously avoided; for even the sanguinary deed of Simeon and Levi had been dictated by the desire of preserving the purity of their family. He left his brothers, and went to *Adullam*. This is a town in the plain of Judah, south-west of Jerusalem, mentioned together with Jarmuth and Sochoh, or with Libnah and Makkedah; it is one of the most ancient cities, and enjoyed an existence of unusual duration; for in the time of the Hebrew conquest it was the seat of a Canaanitish king; a cave in its neighbourhood was the refuge of David from the persecutions of Saul; here his relatives joined him; here he assembled around his person a large number of distressed but resolute men; and here he met a part of the Philistine army; Adullam was fortified by Rehoboam; it was later counted among the important cities of Judah; it was still inhabited after the exile; and existed even in the time of the Maccabees. — Judah's wife became successively the mother of three sons, Er, Onan, and Shelah, of whom the third was born whilst he was in *Chezib*. It is obscure for what purpose this notice is added; and it would be needless to resort to uncertain conjectures on a point of very little importance. Chezib seems to be identical with the town Achzib, which is by the prophet Micah also mentioned together with Adullam (i. 14, 15), and which was likewise situated in the plain of Judah.

6—11. When the father saw his eldest son, Er, arriving at the age of puberty, he selected for him a wife, whose name, *Tamar* (signifying *palm*), though evidently belonging to a Shemitic root, does not justify the conclusion that she was of Hebrew descent. The names Melchizedek and Abimelech are as clearly Shemitic, and the whole tenor of the succeeding narrative proves that she belonged to a strange town, and that Judah had not been more careful with regard to the marriage of his son than to his own. The dangerous and objectionable connection between Abrahamites and heathens was not calculated to train a virtuous character. The evil conduct of Er deserved and roused the Divine anger; he died without leaving behind him a child to preserve his name and to inherit his property. This was deemed a dire and distressing calamity; but in order to temper, at least, its bitterness, and to obviate some of its practical disadvantages, many ancient tribes adopted the following custom. It was the duty of the deceased husband's next brother (*levir*), to marry the widow; and the firstborn son resulting from this matrimony, was in every respect regarded as the heir of the deceased. This custom was, by the Mosaic code,

her as a brother-in-law, and raise up seed to thy brother. 9. And Onan knew that the seed would not be his; and when he went to his brother's wife, he wasted *it* on the ground, not to give seed to his brother. 10. And what he did displeased the Lord: and He killed him also. 11. And Judah said to Tamar his daughter-in-law, Remain a widow in thy father's house, till Shelah my son be grown up: for he thought, he will perhaps also die, like his brothers. And Tamar went and dwelt in her father's house.—12. And after a long time, the daughter of Shuah,

established into a well-defined law; and the man who refused to pay such reverence to the memory of his brother, was made an object of contempt and public reproach (Deut. xxv. 5—10). It must be borne in mind, that the propagation of the family name formed one of the most sacred wishes of the Israelites; that "excision" was looked upon as the most awful indication of Divine wrath; and that polygamy itself was so long maintained, because it offers a greater guarantee of offspring (see pp. 240, 241). The Hebrews were not a strictly practical people; sentiment and indefinite aspirations had a large share in their religious views and social institutions: at an early period embracing and fostering the hope of a Messianic time, when all the nations of the earth would be united in love and the knowledge of God, they were eminently capable of prizing the permanent existence of their families. The agrarian character of the Mosaic constitution added power to this idea. Landed property was the foundation of the political edifice, and equality its main pillar. Each family was identified with a certain portion of the sacred soil; its extinction was, therefore, more strongly apprehended by the individual, and was injurious to the prosperity of the state, as the accumulation of wealth in the hands of individuals threatened to disturb the equality of the citizens. It is, therefore, impossible to misunderstand the spirit and tendency of the law concerning the marriage with the brother's widow; it was neither dictated by the desire of preventing the abandoned condition of the widow, or of counteracting some other fancied abuse; its purport is distinctly expressed to have been to procure a descendant to the brother (ver. 8); "that the name of the deceased be preserved upon his inheritance, and that his name be not erased from among his brethren and from the gate of his town" (Ruth iv. 10).—It may suffice to add, in this place, that similar customs prevailed among the Indians, Persians, and some Italian tribes, and that they are still practised by the Tsherkessians and Tartars, the Gallas in Abyssinia, the Afghans, and other nations.

It was in conformity with this law that Judah commanded his second son, Onan, to marry the childless widow of his elder brother. But Onan was not more virtuous than the family to which he belonged; unwilling to maintain his brother's name, he knew how to frustrate the hopes of Judah. God took away his life for that reckless wickedness. Now, Judah became himself reluctant to give to Tamar his third son also; advancing the pretext, that Shelah was still too young to marry, he desired her to return to her father's house, as was customary for widows without children (Lev. xxii. 13), but to consider herself as the betrothed wife of Shelah. This imposed upon her the strict duty not to contract any other marriage; but she obeyed the request, not knowing that Judah, from deceit and superstitious fear, never intended to realize his promise.

12—17. Tamar waiting in vain to be released from her widowhood, was deter-

Judah's wife, died; and Judah was comforted, and went up to his sheepshearers to Timnath, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite. 13. And it was told to Tamar, saying, Behold thy father-in-law goeth up to Timnath to shear his sheep. 14. And she laid off the garments of her widowhood from her, and covered herself with a veil, and wrapped herself, and sat down in the gate of Enaim, which *is* by the way to Timnath; for she saw that Shelah was grown, and she was not given to him to wife. 15. And Judah saw her, and he thought her *to be* an unchaste woman; for she had covered her face. 16. And he turned to her by the way, and said, Come, I pray thee, let me come to thee; for he knew not that she *was* his daughter-in-law. And she said, What wilt thou give me, that thou mayest come

mined to claim and to pursue her rights; but she blameably outstepped the due limits; for instead of seeking justice she was intent upon revenge; and she thus became the cause of new moral degradations.—Judah had lost his wife; and at the end of the period of mourning, he went with his friend, Hirah, to Timnath, to take part in the rejoicings usually connected with the shearing of the sheep (xxxi. 19). *Timnah* or Timnath was a town belonging to the district of Judah, but situated on its frontiers, not far from Ekron, and was, therefore, counted to the *plain* of Judah. But this position at the boundary made its possession uncertain; we find it, therefore, first in the hands of the tribe of Judah; then it was incorporated in the territory of Dan; in the time of the Judges it was under the dominion of the Philistines; but later, reconquered by the Israelites, it gained importance, and acquired sovereignty over smaller towns, but was, in the reign of King Ahaz, again subdued by the Philistines. It was fortified in the period of the Maccabees, and was, in the time of Titus, still regarded as the fourth important town among the eleven which then enjoyed the chief influence in Judæa; it is by Pliny mentioned among the principal toparchies (v. 15); and was, even in the time of Eusebius, known as a considerable village.—Judah, not warned by the death of his two eldest sons, persevered in his heathen connections and in his usual laxity of moral principles; separated from the beneficent influence of his father, he had neither an external nor an inward impulse for self-control, and passion obtained in him unchecked sway. Tamar, shrewd enough to perceive it, found means to ensnare her father-in-law in the nets of seduction; she awaited his arrival at the gate of the little place, Enaim, which he was obliged to pass on his way to Timnah; a veil concealed her features; and, adorned with a gay and striking attire, she succeeded completely in her plans upon Judah's powers of resistance. It is unnecessary to point out the depth of corruption here displayed. Judah, though not guilty of faithlessness, as his wife had died before, nor willingly committing incest, as he did not recognise Tamar (ver. 15), contributed to the depravity of public morals; while Tamar was shameless enough to desire an offspring from the father instead of the son, and deliberately to allure him to a nefarious act. These were the consequences of Judah's heedless alliances with pagans.

18—26. When three months later, it was reported to Judah that Tamar was with child, his moral feelings were sud-

to me? 17. And he said, I will send *thee* a kid of the goats from the flock. And she said, If thou givest *me* a pledge, till thou sendest *it*. 18. And he said, What pledge shall I give thee? And she said, Thy signet, and thy string, and thy staff that *is* in thy hand. And he gave *it* her, and came to her, and she conceived by him. 19. And she rose, and went away, and laid off her veil from her, and put on the garments of her widowhood. 20. And Judah sent the kid of the goats by the hand of his friend the Adullamite, to receive *his* pledge from the woman's hand: but he did not find her. 21. And he asked the men of her place, saying, Where *is* the courtesan at Enaim by the way side? And they said, No courtesan hath been here. 22. And he returned to Judah, and said, I did not find her; and the

denly roused to the highest standard of virtue. As she was bound to consider herself as the promised wife of Shelah, a misconduct on her part was nothing less than adultery, legally visited with the death of lapidation (Deut. xxii. 23, 24). Judah, indignant and excited, still capable of feeling warmly for the honour of his house, in his authority as the head of the family, commanded that the punishment of burning should without delay be executed upon her (Lev. xx. 14; xxi. 9). But how could he perform the office of judge as he was himself immediately implicated in the guilt? He had left, as pledges, with Tamar, his seal, his string, and his stick; and when, on the point of being led to the fatal pile, she sent to him those objects, with the words: "I am with child by the man to whom these things belong"; he shuddered at the thought of his base crime; he confessed that, hideous as Tamar's sin might be, she was more righteous than he himself (ver. 26); he saw his wrong in not marrying her to his third son Shelah; and though he might feel that his neglect did not justify Tamar in designing her criminal plans, he was, at the same time, aware that they would have been fruitless had his heart been less accessible to vice. He could not, therefore, in justice condemn Tamar to the terrible death at first resolved against her; for he had himself, though unwittingly, committed a detestable transgression deserving capital punishment under a double aspect (Lev. xx. 10, 12). Leniency was further recommended by the condition of his own house. As two of his sons had died without leaving offspring, and he feared the same fate with regard to the third, seeing little hope of the preservation of his name through his grand-children, he was reluctant to lose, by Tamar's death, the prospects thus opened for obtaining progeny.

The *seal* suspended from the neck over the breast with a silk string, was worn in the bosom between the two chief garments, and guarded with attentive care; hence it is in the Scriptures considered as the symbol of faithfulness and tender, inextinguishable affection; it is the image of the Divine love for the pious and the virtuous; it is used as a metaphor similar to the apple of the eye, as a most precious possession; and denotes election and elevation. Among the ancient Babylonians a seal was indispensably worn by every man. The Assyrian excavations have brought to light seals and signets of the most varied descriptions. In a chamber of the palace of Kouyunjik were discovered many pieces of fine clay bearing

men of the place also said, there was no courtesan in this *place*. 23. And Judah said, Let her take *it* to her, lest we be shamed: behold, I sent this kid, and thou hast not found her. 24. And about three months *later*, it was told to Judah, saying, Tamar thy daughter-in-law hath been unchaste; and also, behold, she *is* with child by unchastity. And Judah said, Bring her forth, and let her be burnt. 25. When she *was* brought forth, she sent to her father-in-law, saying, By the man to whom these *things* belong I *am* with child: and she said, Recognise, I

the impressions of seals, some of which are still found affixed to public documents, though the writing itself is no more legible owing to the conflagration which consumed that edifice, or to the lapse of millenniums. Some of those seals are Phœnician and some Egyptian, and among the latter is that celebrated signet with the double impressions of Sabaco, the Æthiopian, the *So* of Scripture (2 Kings xvii. 4), and of an Assyrian priest ministering before the king; which signet was perhaps affixed to a treaty of peace concluded between the two empires. The usual device on Assyrian seals is a king piercing a rampant lion with a dagger, accompanied by a short inscription; that emblem is found on cylinders, gems, and monuments also; it was later adopted by the Persians, and hence it occurs on the walls of Persepolis and on the coins of Darius. Among the other devices may be mentioned horsemen and priests; a crescent, stars, and astronomical figures; a flower and an ear of corn; a scorpion, a bull, and sacred animals; while on Egyptian rings, it seems to have been common to represent two cats sitting back to back and looking round toward each other, with an emblem of the goddess Athor between them. Besides these seals, a very large number of cylinders has been found of various shapes and of very different materials, such as lapislazuli, rock-crystal, amethyst, chalcedony, agate, jasper, and other precious stones, adorned with manifold figures and groups; they were, probably, also used as signets; for not only bags and boxes, but even doors and houses were often, for greater safety, closed with a seal impressed on clay. Large and beautiful collections, both of seals and cylinders, are preserved in the British Museum. — The present signets of the Persians, mostly of silver or carneol, contain, besides the name, generally a verse or sentence from the Koran. The name of the proprietor, with or without some figure or emblem, was engraven upon the seal, and was, instead of the signature, added to all documents; either stamped upon them by means of a black pigment, so that the figures appear dark and the characters blank or white; or affixed to them in an impression of clay, on which the seals were rolled in a moist state, and which was then placed in the furnace and baked. The heat of the oven, which would have dissolved wax or other soft materials, gave increased hardness and consistency to the baked clay. The use of cylinder-seals is especially manifest from the clay tablets found in the Chaldæan tombs, chiefly at Senkereh, and containing, in minute cuneiform characters, the family records of the deceased. The cylinder was rolled over the entire written document, thus rendering forgery almost impossible. But the Babylonians and Egyptians wore the seal not only in the bosom, but also as a ring on the hand, generally on the little finger of the right hand. And since the impression of the seal alone gave legal validity to private and public documents, any person, by

pray thee, to whom these *things*, the signet, and the string, and the staff, belong. 26. And Judah recognised *them*, and said, She hath been more righteous than I; since I did not give her to Shelah my son. And he knew her no more.—27. And it was in the time of her travail, and, behold, twins *were* in her womb. 28. And when she travailed, *the one* put out *his* hand: and the midwife took and bound upon his hand a crimson *thread*, saying, This *one* came out first. 29. And when he drew back his hand, behold, his brother came out: and she said, How

entrusting his seal to another, thereby conferred upon him the right of concluding transactions in his stead; if the king gave his seal or signet to some dignitary, he thereby appointed him his viceroy, so that "nothing but the throne" distinguished both (xli. 40, 42); as Alexander the Great, by giving, on his death-bed, his signet to Perdiccas, appeared to have named him his successor. Hence the loss of the seal was regarded as a very serious accident, as it might affect the property and the entire social position of the owner; and forgery, with regard to signets, was, as it is still, visited with the severest punishments. Thus we may understand the anxiety and disappointment of Judah, when the disappearance of Tamar threatened to deprive him of his seal (ver. 23).—The great antiquity of the art of engraving is, by the discovery of the authentic relics to which we have alluded, confirmed beyond a doubt. It is still practised, with considerable skill, by Eastern nations and tribes; and forms an important branch of their industry. It suffices briefly to add, that, besides those signets, rings were worn by the rich as an ornament and a mark of wealth, like all other articles of luxury; the Egyptians especially appear to have had a great predilection for such trinkets; they wore, sometimes, two or three on the same finger, especially the third, and even on the thumb; the scarabæus was the usual form; the material was mostly gold, but sometimes silver, bronze, or brass, and among the poorer classes ivory and blue porcelain; on the scarabæus, which was generally of cornelian, granite, agate, amethyst, and other valuable stones, but sometimes of stained lime-stone and the ordinary blue pottery, was engraved the name of the owner, or of the reigning monarch, or of deities, with their emblems. The men in Assyria, however, do not appear to have worn finger-rings.

A staff also was in the hand of every Babylonian; it was necessarily adorned with some device carved upon it, and consisting in a flower or a fruit, a bird or some other animal.

27—30. Tamar became the mother of two sons, under circumstances similar to those which accompanied the birth of Esau and Jacob (xxv. 25, 26); the younger son strove to gain the priority; but the struggle was, in this instance, accomplished before the brothers saw the light of day; Perez, by a determined and desperate effort, acquired the primogeniture; Zerah, though unmistakeably bearing the badge of precedence, was obliged at last to yield: for from Perez descended, in the tenth generation, the glorious king David, who made the Hebrew name feared among the nations, and raised the Hebrew commonwealth to the zenith of its power (Ruth iv. 18—22). The reproach of his ancestor and of his doubtful birth, though by no means forgotten or disregarded, was deemed no obstacle in the way of his elevation and sacred election; was not even Ruth, the mother of his grandfather, of Moabitic origin? The purity of the race was, indeed, most forcibly enjoined upon

hast thou broken forth? upon thee *be this* breach: therefore his name was called Perez [Breach]. 30. And afterwards came out his brother, who had the crimson *thread* upon his hand: and his name was called Zerah [Splendour].

the Israelites; but that principle, however solemn and fundamental, did not act as a blind fatality; the liberty of the human will, supported by Divine grace, could break its power and curb it into submission; the descendants were not allowed to suffer for the levity or the crimes of their ancestors; and their *personal* worth could raise them to the loftiest eminence. These are some of the lessons enforced in our tale.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Summary.—Joseph gained the full confidence of his master, but was calumniated by the wife of the latter, and thrown into the state prison (xxxix.). He interpreted the dreams of the chief butler and the chief baker of Pharaoh, who were detained in the same prison (xl.). Two years later, Pharaoh himself had a double dream, which the wise men of Egypt were unable to interpret, but which Joseph, then thirty years old, and on the interference of the chief butler brought from the jail, declared to indicate seven years of plenty and seven years of scarcity. He was by the king made viceroy of Egypt, and married to Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera, chief priest of Heliopolis, and he became by her the father of two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. He then made efficient preparations to meet the necessities of the period of famine. All the nations came to Egypt to buy corn (xli.). Among the strangers were the sons of Jacob, except Benjamin. Recognising his brothers, but unrecognised by them, Joseph treated them harshly as spies, forbade them to come again unless they brought Benjamin with them, kept Simeon as a pledge, and ordered their money to be returned in their sacks (xlii.). When want compelled them to renew their journey to Egypt, Jacob, after a long and determined refusal, at last consented to send Benjamin with them. Joseph continued his strange conduct; declined to accept the money which the brothers returned; invited them to a feast, but treated Benjamin with particular distinction (xliii.). When they departed, he ordered again the money to be put into their sacks, and his silver cup into the sack of Benjamin. His servant pursued after them; they returned, and offered themselves all as slaves, while Joseph declared that he would keep Benjamin alone. At last, after a most powerful address on the part of Judah (xliv.), Joseph made himself known to his brothers, dispelled their apprehensions, and, with the sanction of Pharaoh, sent them to Canaan to his father, to invite him to come to Egypt (xlv.). Jacob, 130 years old, arrived with all his household, forming, with Joseph and his sons, seventy souls, and settled in the province of Goshen, after having personally obtained Pharaoh's permission. Joseph, by a shrewd policy, brought all the property and the land of the Egyptians, except that of the priests, into the immediate possession of the king (xlvi., xlvii.). — We have in this summary noticed only the most important points, as the connection of the parts is more fully developed in the following notes (see on xlii. 1—16).

1. And Joseph was brought down to Egypt, and Poti-

1. The Biblical writer, conscious of the almost foreign spirit of the episode by which the history of Joseph had been interrupted, resumes it by repeating some of the chief features of the preceding narrative. The caravan which, coming from Gilead, had passed by Dothan, and had there purchased the youth, continued its journey southward to Shechem and Jerusalem: here the route separates; one line proceeds

phar, an officer of Pharaoh, chief of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmaelites, who had

almost strictly southward to Hebron, through the Desert of Paran, and with a slight curve to the west, down to the head of the Gulf of Akabah; while the other road runs from Jerusalem in a south-westerly direction to Gaza, and from there to the Valley of the Nile, either through the Pass of Dshebel-el-Tih, or more eastward through that of Dshebel-el-Edshmeh. On one of these routes, Joseph seems to have been carried to the town *On*, then perhaps the residence of the Egyptian kings. *On* was consecrated to the sun; and the name itself, which is Egyptian, signifies *light*; hence the Greeks called it, by a literal translation, *Heliopolis*. It was situated about twelve Roman miles north of Babylon, and about double that distance from Memphis, on the eastern side of the Pelusiac arm of the Nile; it was built on a mound, and formed the centre of the important district of the same name, which sent ten deputies to the great national court of justice, and which, after the dispersion, contained a very considerable Hebrew population. It was one of the most ancient and most sacred Egyptian cities, famous for its splendid temple of the sun adorned with majestic pyramids and columns, for the pretended periodical appearance of the fabulous bird Phœnix, and for the eminent and unequalled learning of its priests. Indeed it was the chief seat of Egyptian science, especially astronomy; and its scholars were the teachers, if not of Joseph and Moses, at least of Pythagoras, Thales, and Solon, of Plato and Eudoxus, and of a host of enquiring travellers. Here one of the great public festivals was celebrated; and the sacred bullock Mnevis, the rival of Apis, was here fed in the holy edifice. The town suffered greatly in the time of the Persian kings; but even Alexander the Great visited it with eager interest; however, Strabo found it in ruins; Augustus and Constantine plundered it freely, to adorn the public places of Rome and Constantinople; yet even travellers in the middle ages were struck with astonishment by the colossal sphinxes, more than thirty cubits high; by the grand gates and propylæa of the temple; and by the two immense obelisks (called Pharaoh's Needles), whose summits were covered with massive brass, whose sides bore the name of Osirtasen I. of the twelfth dynasty, the ruler of both Upper and Lower Egypt, and which formed the centre of converging avenues of many smaller obelisks: but few remnants have been preserved to bear witness to the pristine grandeur and magnificence of Heliopolis; one of those obelisks alone, a quadrangular cone, sixty to seventy feet high, of a block of red granite, covered with very ancient hieroglyphics, and forming one of the earliest specimens of Egyptian architecture, marks the site of the once sacred town; it stands near the present village of Mahtariah, about six miles north-east of Cairo, amidst low mounds, which circumscribe the area, nearly quadrangular, and about three miles in extent, once occupied by the ancient city, but now furrowed by the ploughshares of the native peasantry. An old well called "fountain of light" (*Ain el Shams*) recalls the former name of that principal stronghold of Egyptian erudition and Egyptian idolatry. If Joseph's wisdom, in such a town, surpassed that of all wise men, it must have been extraordinary, if not Divine: this is the inference which the Biblical writer desires the reader should draw.

The Egyptian kings made a peculiar boast of executing their gigantic public works by the hands of foreign slaves, either acquired by money, or captives of war. The example of the monarchs was gradually imitated by the wealthier subjects; national pride rendered foreigners more acceptable as slaves than natives; the demand was promptly and plentifully supplied by the far-travelling Arabian merchants; thus the execrable slave-trade began at an early period to flourish in the land of the Pharaohs; and on the monuments, foreigners are often represented as

brought him down thither. 2. And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master, the Egyptian. 3. And his master saw that the Lord *was* with him, and that the Lord made all that he did prosper in his hand. 4. And Joseph found favour in his eyes, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all *that* he had he gave into his hand. 5. And from the time *that* he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had in the house and in the field. 6. And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he cared with him for nought, save the bread which he ate. And Joseph was beautiful of

serving in the families of priests and military chiefs. Joseph, a victim of this fatal commerce, was sold into the house of Potiphar, who is expressly called an Egyptian, not a superfluous addition, as the population of Heliopolis, from remote times, included a considerable admixture of Arabians; and as Joseph could rise through an Egyptian only to the high political station which he was destined to occupy.

2—6. The love of God which rested on Abraham's race, was, in the case of Joseph, the pure and pious youth, enhanced by individual merit: if, therefore, Jacob, who reached Mesopotamia with many previous sins to atone for, brought blessing and happiness into the house of Laban (xxx. 27, 30), it was the more natural, that Joseph's steps should be guided by a Divine power, and that an invisible benediction should attend all his plans and undertakings. Potiphar, soon made aware of these extraordinary results of Joseph's presence, regarded him as a most valuable acquisition, counting him among those favoured individuals, who, in accordance with the doctrine of fatalism, were as unfailingly believed to spread bliss and success around them, as others were thought ominously to cause mishap and vexation. Joseph, appointed the chief servant, received the sole and unrestricted management of all the complicated offices connected with the household of an Egyptian grandee; he saved his master every care and trouble in domestic matters, and left him nothing to do but to enjoy the pleasures of the table (ver. 6). But the influence of Joseph's presence extended to all the property of his master, especially the produce of the field (ver. 5). For as Potiphar, the head of the king's guard, was a member of the warrior caste, he was necessarily an occupier of land: each soldier, belonging to either of the two principal classes of the army, the Hermotybies and the Calasiries, received twelve auroræ of land, and the higher officers, no doubt, more in proportion; since it was deemed a fundamental principle of policy, that those who defend the country should be personally interested in its integrity and independence.

7—18. Temptation, the touch-stone of sterling virtue, decides the all-important question, whether innocence of conduct is the consequence of weakness and indifference, or of moral strength; it decides, whether calmness of mind is the result of the stagnation, or of the equilibrium, of the internal powers. Hitherto Joseph, though exposed to most severe vicissitudes of fortune, had been allowed to follow the

form, and beautiful of appearance.—7. And it happened after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me. 8. But he refused, and said to his master's wife, Behold, my master careth not with me about what *is* in the house, and he hath given all that he hath into my hand; 9. *There is* none greater in this house than I; nor hath he withheld anything from me but thee, because thou *art* his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? 10. And though she spoke to Joseph day by day, he did not listen to her, to lie by her, *and* to be with her. 11. And one day, when he went into the house to do his work, and *there was* none of the men of the house there within: 12. She seized him by his garment, saying, Lie

spontaneous impulse of his nature; he was cherished by his father; he lived harmlessly and in childlike simplicity among his brothers; he scarcely understood their jealousy and their hatred; and when he saw himself the object of their heartless cruelty, he found ready relief in his brilliant hopes. The purity of his mind received an additional charm from the perfect beauty of his person; he was a blooming youth when he entered Potiphar's house; and there he matured into a vigorous and energetic man. His mistress, who had daily opportunities of observing him, was as much struck by his honest zeal as fascinated by his accomplished grace; she was at last conquered, and made degrading proposals. Joseph resisted by the aid of two powerful weapons, gratitude to his master, and the fear of God. His answer, impressive and pathetic, appealed to the holiest feelings of the human breast: "how can I do this great wickedness and sin against God"? Had any moral power been left in the wretched woman, her conscience would have risen in indignation against her unholy emotion, and would have steeled her for the fearful struggle between duty and sentiment. But Joseph's firmness roused her evil passions to still greater vehemence; she allowed no day to pass without repeating her unlawful importunities; till at last, overwhelmed by her passion, and forgetting the solemn vows of matrimony, she sacrificed her honour and her pride, and nearly threw herself into the deepest abyss of disgrace to which woman can sink. Now the most critical moment had arrived for Joseph also: he knew the *danger* if he provoked the revenge of his humiliated mistress; and he weighed the *sin* of compliance;—he despised the former in order to avoid the latter; an extraordinary moral effort saved him; and he fled from the nets of seduction. Was it love that had actuated Potiphar's wife? If any doubt remained, it is dispelled by the conduct which she then adopted. Her feelings for Joseph were at once converted into the fiercest hatred; intent only upon her own safety and reputation, she seemed to have but one desire—his destruction (comp. 2 Sam.xiii.15). Unblushingly perverting the truth, and imputing to him her own crime, she acted in a manner so natural to women in her despicable position, that we cannot be surprised at finding several and almost exact parallels in other traditions also; for in the same manner was Hippolytus calumniated by Phædra, and Bellerophon by Anteia, the wife of king Prœtus.

But it may be asked: has this narrative sufficient internal probability? and especially, is it in accordance with the cha-

with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and went out into the street. 13. And when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand, and had fled into the street; 14. She called to the men of her house, and said to them, saying, See, a Hebrew hath been brought to us to insult us; he came in to me to lie with me, and I cried with a loud voice: 15. And when he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried, he left his garment with me, and fled, and went out into the street. 16. And she laid his garment by her, until his master came home. 17. And she spoke to him like these words, saying, The Hebrew servant, whom thou hast brought to us, came in to me to insult me.

racter and the customs of the ancient Egyptians? As this has not seldom been denied by recent critics, it is necessary to offer a few illustrations derived both from ancient writers and from the monuments. It is at present universally allowed, that the position of the women was in Egypt by far more favourable and unrestricted than in most of the other eastern countries. Women were admitted to the throne; Isis herself, one of the principal deities, was believed to have been one of the first queens of Egypt; Nitocris and Scemiophris are renowned princesses of later times; the wives of the kings are not seldom represented on the monuments at the side of their husbands; and, in many cases, they possessed higher power and received greater homage than the monarchs themselves. Women served in the temple as priestesses, and two of them, employed in the sanctuary of Thebes, founded individually the oracles of Dodona and of Ammon, though it appears that they were in some districts excluded from those sacred offices. They were not rigidly secluded in their harems, nor jealously watched by eunuchs; they were not regarded as slaves, and occupied no contemptible rank in the household; it is even stated that they ruled over their husbands, who were obliged to pledge themselves in the marriage-contract to obey their wives in every respect. When the daughters married, they received their due share of their parents' property as a dowry. The Egyptians, in this point more liberal than the Greeks, often entertained men and women in the same apartment; both sexes were seated in mixed groups; and sometimes a young child was allowed to sit on the ground at the side of the mother, or on the father's knee; several beautiful frescoes, portraying how such promiscuous parties were amused with music and dance, were regaled with wine and other refreshments, and presented with garlands and ointments, have been preserved to our time, and prove the ancient Egyptians to have been a convivial and pleasure-seeking people. These facts will sufficiently explain how Joseph could see his mistress, and so give rise to the occurrences described in our narrative.

The Egyptian ladies were not remarkable either for grace or beauty; they are pictured, by ancient writers, with no flattering colours; nor do the monuments permit any romantic illusion on this point: if rotundity and corpulency, thick and turned-up lips, contracted brows, long oval eyes, and well-developed and prominent ears, are attractions, the Egyptian ladies belong to the fairest of their sex (comp. p. 180). It may be that this absence of personal charms facilitated the resistance of Joseph; though it is precarious to confound our notions of beauty with those entertained by ancient or by eastern tribes. But the immorality of Potiphar's

18. And when I lifted up my voice and cried, he left his garment with me, and fled into the street.—19. And when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spoke to him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me, his anger was kindled. 20. And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners *were* bound: and he was there in the prison. 21. And the Lord was with Joseph, and inclined the love *of others* upon him, and gave him favour in the eyes of the keeper of the prison. 22. And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that *were* in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he did *it*. 23. The

wife is in perfect accordance with the reputation generally borne by Egyptian women. They were famous for conjugal faithlessness; Pheron, the son of Sesostris, searched long in vain for a woman who had remained devoted to her husband; and when he, at last, found one, he burnt all the guilty women as a fearful example, in the town of Erythrebolus. It does not appear that the more privileged social position of Egyptian ladies exercised an ennobling influence upon their habits; they seem to have rivalled the men in the vice of intemperance, generally prevalent, though but gradually acquired; and drunken women appear on the sculptural works, with all the attributes, often repulsive rather than ludicrous, following in the train of degrading excesses.

19—23. The shameless wife, by adroit sophistry, threw the whole weight of the reproach upon her husband, whom she maliciously charged with having brought into the house an unknown Hebrew slave to mock and to assail her honour. Potiphar's anger was quickly roused, and in order to protect his dignity and reputation, he commanded Joseph's immediate imprisonment. He could scarcely pronounce a severer verdict; capital punishment would have passed beyond the limits of justice into the sphere of revenge; for the crime imputed to Joseph was, even according to his wife's statement, only intended. Potiphar, whose character is represented in a perfectly favourable light, and who, like several other heathens introduced in the Book of Genesis, though unable to resign error, showed himself capable of understanding the truth (ver. 3), was free from all suspicion, and seems to have placed implicit reliance in her words.—The criminals offending either against the king or the high officers of his household, were incarcerated in a prison attached to the house of the chief of the royal guard, and standing under his immediate authority. But the practical supervision of the establishment was entrusted to a governor who had, no doubt, to communicate with, and was responsible to, his superior, the chief of the guard. The Egyptian prisoners were mostly condemned to compulsory labour, except, perhaps, persons of rank and eminence, for whom loss of liberty and personal humiliation were deemed punishments sufficiently rigorous and tormenting. Thus Joseph was ordered to wait upon two high functionaries doomed to share with him the same prison (xl. 4). But here, also, the mercy of God protected him; a supernatural success manifestly attended his occupations; the governor, like his former master, was favourably and benevolently inclined towards him; and committed to his unwearied zeal the control over all affairs. Joseph became the most favoured inmate of the prison: but who should rescue him from

keeper of the prison did not look not to anything *that was* under his hand; because the Lord was with him, and *that* which he did, the Lord made *it* to prosper.

that place of gloom and distress? Caprice and calumny had caused his fall; he had been condemned without proof, without enquiry, and without an opportunity of defence; he had to expect nothing from the arbitrariness of summary jurisdiction, not likely to be over-scrupulous in the case of a foreigner and a slave; his innocence and his hopes alone remained to cheer him in the dreary dungeon.

CHAPTER XL.

1. And it happened after these things, *that* the butler of the king of Egypt and *his* baker offended against their lord, the king of Egypt. 2. And Pharaoh was wroth against his two officers, against the chief butler, and against the chief baker. 3. And he gave them into custody in the house of the chief of the guard, into the prison, the place where Joseph *was* incarcerated. 4. And the chief of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them: and they remained some time in custody. —5. And they dreamt a dream, both of them, each man his

1—4. The realisation of Joseph's dreams seemed now not only improbable but almost impossible. Separated from his father and his brothers, and living in a different country, a prisoner and a slave, how could he indulge in the ambitious and soaring reveries of power and authority? But as our narrative is intended to embody the doctrine of the special providence of God, it designedly introduces new and greater complications, darker and denser gloom, and almost impervious mazes of misery: it enforces the lesson, that however wretched and abandoned the pious man may appear, the eye of God watches over his career, and the very misfortunes which his short-sightedness may lament, are the stepping-stones of his rescue and his greatness.—Joseph's mind was too well regulated to fall into mournful despondency; he displayed in the prison the usual serenity of his disposition; he was faithfully devoted to those with whose attendance he was charged, to such a degree that he noticed even the changeful expressions of their countenances and the fluctuations of their humour: yet he was far from indolently indifferent to his humiliating position; he seemed to watch every opportunity which promised the remotest chance of deliverance; he felt deeply the violence of which he had been made the pitiable victim; he was thoroughly impressed with the double wrong done to him, that he had been stolen from his father's house, and that, by despotic arbitrariness, he had been deprived of his liberty (ver. 15). He thus kept alive within himself the feeling of that Divine government which cannot permit the triumph of injustice; whilst he patiently bore the severe trials which had been imposed upon him from inscrutable reasons.

5—15. The chief butler and the chief baker, for some offence not specified in the text, had been sent into the prison standing under the inspection of Joseph's master. Though they were treated with a consideration due to their former distinc-

dream in one night, each man according to the interpretation of his dream, the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, who *were* incarcerated in the prison. 6. And Joseph came in to them in the morning, and saw them, and, behold, they *were* dejected. 7. And he asked Pharaoh's officers who *were* with him in custody in his master's house, saying, Why is your face sad to-day? 8. And they said to him, We have dreamt a dream, and *there is* no one to interpret it. And Joseph said to them, *Do* not interpretations *belong* to God? Tell me *them*, I pray you. 9. And the chief butler told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, In my dream, behold, a vine *was* before me; 10. And on the vine *were* three branches; and it *was*

tion, their thoughts were naturally occupied with the possibilities and prospects of release; till at last a dream supervened, to give a distinct shape to their impatient hopes. The fact that *both* dreams occurred in the *same* night (ver. 5), was regarded as a significant guarantee that they were not accidental plays of a wandering imagination, but that their speedy fulfilment was certain (see p. 411). The noble officials, afflicted by their visions, were sad and dejected; and a gloomy pensiveness settled on their faces. But it may seem surprising, why the *butler* should have felt such consternation. His dream appears so clearly to foretel a happy issue, that we should rather expect to find him hopeful and rejoiced. However, his anxious mind might construe the vine to refer to *himself*; and as it was a current Egyptian idea to compare the juice of the grape with blood, he might fear that his own life or blood was to be sacrificed to Pharaoh. But the penetrating intelligence of Joseph saw more correctly; with safe and unwavering decision he declared the vine to be the emblem, not of the butler's person, but of his office; and he predicted that, in three days, he would, as in former times, present the cup to Pharaoh, and be restored to all the privileges of his station. Joseph was so certain that he had disclosed the right interpretation of the dream, that he entreated the butler, in the most fervent terms, to represent his innocence to Pharaoh. Yet he declined every personal merit; he assumed no air of superior wisdom; "the interpretations belong to God"; he was satisfied if he was but His humble instrument.

The introduction of wine in our narrative has also been used by some expositors to question its trustworthiness and accuracy. But the progress made in the researches on Egyptian antiquities enables us to verify and to illustrate the various allusions occurring in the Scriptures regarding the vines of Egypt. The notice of Herodotus that in the land of the Pharaohs the vine was not cultivated; the opinion, that wine was avoided because it was regarded as the blood of Typhon, or of the ancient enemies of the land; and the statement of Plutarch, that it was wholly forbidden to the kings of Egypt previous to Psammetichus; have long been proved to be utterly groundless; representations of the vineyard and the winepress are found on monuments executed in the times of the earliest dynasties; it is even stated, that the first vine was discovered in the Egyptian city Plinthina, on which account the ancient writers call the Egyptians fond of wine and of drinking; wine was used for medicinal purposes; it was employed in the offerings made to the deities; Osiris was popularly believed to be identical with the Greek Bacchus, and was represented to have been the first

as if it budded; *and* its blossoms shot forth; *and* its clusters matured ripe grapes: 11. And Pharaoh's cup *was* in my hand: and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand. 12. And Joseph said to him, This *is* its interpretation: The three branches *are* three days: 13. Within three days more Pharaoh will lift up thy head, and restore thee to thy place; and thou wilt deliver Pharaoh's cup into his hand, in the former manner when thou wast his butler. 14. Only remember me when it will be well with thee, and do kindness, I pray

who found the vine and taught men its cultivation; wine was imported into Egypt from Greece and Phœnicia; it formed a part of the daily rations allowed to the soldiers of the king's guard; it was not even interdicted to the priests, except, perhaps, to those of Heliopolis, though but a limited quantity was permitted to them to ensure their constant efficiency for their sacred functions; and wine was plentifully served at banquets and other social meetings to both men and women; even if, as some believe, the frightful skeleton, usually exhibited to the guests, with the words, "Eat and drink, for soon you will be like this," was a symbolical exhortation to temperance, it did not always produce the desired effect; but it is much more probable that it was intended to invite to a free and full enjoyment of the pleasures of the table, since inexorable death will not fail to pay its unwelcome visit. The vine occurred in Egypt in a great variety of species, of which that grown in the Thebaid was so agreeable and light that it was, without injury, given to invalids; the wine of Mareotis was most esteemed and plentiful, and possessed the advantage of keeping to a great age; while that of Tenia was renowned for its richness and aromatic fragrance. The vine flourishes in Egypt even in the water, like an aquatic plant; it is, therefore, not injured by the inundations of the Nile, which, moreover, never commence, in Lower Egypt, before the middle of August, when the vintage is, in most cases, almost entirely completed.—Vineyards, very tastefully arranged, were either combined with, or contiguous to, orchards, furnished with tanks, and often with reservoirs, with summer-houses, and reception-rooms, with avenues of trees and grass-plots, and always with a building for the wine-press (Isai. v. 1, 2).—"The vines were trained on trellis-work, supported by transverse rafters resting on pillars," which were, in many instances, gaily coloured, and divided the vineyard into numerous avenues; many vines were allowed to grow as standing bushes, and, on account of their lowness, required no support; while others were formed into a number of beautiful bowers. At the season of the vintage, from the end of June, boys were engaged to frighten away the birds by a sling or the sound of the voice; in gathering the fruit, the precarious aid of trained monkeys was, more curiously than profitably, employed; and after the conclusion of the vintage, kids were allowed to browse upon the vines.—The simplest mode of pressing the wine, was by putting the grapes into a bag, and turning the latter by two poles in contrary directions, or by some other contrivance based on the same principle: but more remarkable is the foot-press; the workmen trod the grapes with naked feet, supporting themselves by ropes suspended from the roof. We possess several beautiful representations of such wine-presses, remarkable for elaborateness and tastefulness. After some other liquid

thee, to me, and make mention of me to Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house: 15. For indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews; and here also have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon. —16. When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was good, he said to Joseph, I also *was* in my dream, and, behold, *I had* three baskets of white *bread* on my head: 17. And in the uppermost basket *there was* all kind of food for Pharaoh, the work of the baker; and the birds ate them out of the basket upon my head. 18. And Joseph answered and said, This *is* its interpretation: The three

was probably added to the juice, it was clarified by sieving, and, perhaps, by the application of eggs.

The dream of the chief butler describes in rapid but comprehensive outlines the different stages in the growth of the vine; how it produces buds and blossoms, forms clusters, and matures ripe grapes, which the butler then presses into the goblet (ver. 10). This completeness seems to be the principal object of the narrative; it may be that only in order to shorten the whole process, and to compress it within the narrow frame of a vision, the juice, after having just been pressed out with the hand, is stated to have been placed before the king; whereas, in reality, it might have been allowed to ferment the usual time, as it is represented in numerous frescoes: but it is as probable, that sometimes temperate persons (as it was later ordained in the Koran) abstained from fermented wine on account of its more intoxicating power, and that, at some period, the priests who regulated the king's table, as they controlled all his public and private affairs, prescribed to him the use of the unfermented juice of the grape.

16—19. The chief baker, encouraged by the auspicious interpretation of his colleague's dream, told Joseph, without further request, the vision with which he felt harassed and oppressed. Joseph, at once perceiving that it was of ominous and fatal import, did not conceal its meaning; he told the unhappy man boldly and fearlessly that the dream foreboded his death, and that, in three days, Pharaoh would demand his head. It might seem cruel to torment the imagination of the prisoner by foretelling him the precise time of his execution; but his dream as well as that of the chief butler, are, in our text, regarded as Divine prophecies, not useless in the economy of Joseph's life, because designed to be the remote means of bringing Joseph's wisdom and superior virtue to the knowledge of Pharaoh; they prove the innocence or trifling offence of the butler, and the guilt of the baker; and as the former deserved the joyous presentiment of his happy restoration, the latter merited the anticipation of pain as a part of the punishment awaiting his crime. Joseph, in other respects the instrument, is, in this instance, the herald of Providence.

The confectioner's art obtained in Egypt a large share of attention, and the very various operations which it involves, are, with the usual minuteness, reproduced on the monuments. Here we see how the flour was sifted and purified; how the paste was either kneaded with the hands or the feet; was formed into rolls, upon the surface of which certain seeds were sprinkled; and how the dough, mixed with fruits and other ingredients, received the shape of an ox, a sheep, or a fish, of a triangle, a star, or a disk, or of other favourite objects. The ancient Egyptians made bread the chief article of their food; they were, hence, by way of derision, called by the Greeks "bread-eaters"; the poorer classes baked it usually from

baskets *are* three days; 19. Within three days more Pharaoh will lift up thy head from thee, and will hang thee upon a tree; and the birds will eat thy flesh from thee. — 20. And on the third day, *which was* Pharaoh's birthday, he made a feast to all his servants: and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and the head of the chief baker among his servants. 21. And he restored the chief butler to his butlership; and he gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand; 22. But he hanged the chief baker; as Joseph had interpreted to them. 23. But the chief butler did not remember Joseph, but forgot him.

spelt, or barley, or the flour of the *doora* or *sorghum*; but wheat also was very extensively cultivated, freely used by the wealthier part of the population, and frequently offered to the gods. Sometimes other vegetable productions, for instance the middle part of the lotus-plant or lentiles, were baked into bread. — The burdens, as is generally known, were carried by the Egyptian men on their heads, while the women bore them on their shoulders, though we learn from the monuments, that this custom was by no means uniformly observed. Two or three baskets with pastry, one above the other, were frequently carried together on the head. — These remarks will suffice to illustrate the allusions to Egyptian manners contained in our verses.

20—23. Joseph's predictions were literally realised. The birth-day was, among most of the eastern nations, not simply a time of joy. Worshippers of the stars could not but attach to it the highest astronomical importance. The hour of the birth was believed to decide and to rule the destinies of the individual; the juncture of the heavenly bodies at that period was a matter of absorbing anxiety; and experience in the art of fixing the nativities was one of the most powerful weapons in the hands of the sages of Egypt. We can, therefore, well understand why, among many tribes, birth-days were celebrated with mixed feelings of joy and solemnity, and were signalized by religious and sometimes penitential acts.—But the chief butler, restored to the sunshine of royal favour, forgot the humble Hebrew slave whom he left behind in the sad monotony of the dungeon; neither gratitude nor veneration was strong enough to rouse his active sympathy; but Providence prepared the occasion, which, at last, made him the tardy instrument of Joseph's pre-destined eminence.

CHAPTER XLI.

1. And it happened at the end of two years' time, that

1. For the third time are dreams employed as the agencies of Joseph's history: they first foreshadow his illustrious future; they then manifest, that the spirit of God had not abandoned him even in the abject condition of a slave and a prisoner; and they, lastly, are made the immediate forerunners of his greatness. These repeated visions significantly describe that direct and special Providence which the life of Joseph is intended to embody; they show, that the events are not the result of chance or arbitrariness; that they are decreed in the counsel of God long before they occur;

Pharaoh dreamt: and, behold, he was standing by the

and that they are made known to man by extraordinary circumstances. If there is a profound importance even in the fleeting dreams of the night, blind accident — this is the lesson taught in our narrative — is absolutely excluded in the government of the world; an all-penetrating eye looks through the veil of distant occurrences; and an all-powerful hand, driving the swift chariot of Time, leads it unerringly to the fixed goal. But the propriety of Pharaoh's visions and of their interpretation is obvious. The very first words mark their character. Pharaoh thought he was standing by the *Nile*. This river is, in Egypt, the cause and almost exclusive source of blessing and fertility. It is the condition, not of Egypt's prosperity, but material existence; it supplies the want of the rain which, in many parts of the country, never or rarely falls; it diffuses its fructifying floods over vast tracts of the arable land; it is, by numberless arms, canals, and trenches, conducted over the meadows and fields, which, so irrigated, often with the aid of machines, yield harvests almost unparalleled for their abundance and excellence. Hence, the Nile was called "the rival of the clouds"; it was an object of veneration and worship; it was the holy, the blessed, or beneficent river; a great public festival (the Niloa) was annually celebrated in its honour with magnificent sacrifices and solemn invocations, at the time of the summer solstice; it had its own temples and priests; the kings honoured it by grand and brilliant processions; and especially at the season of its rise, it was watched with anxious solicitude and reverential care; for then the absorbing question regarding the prospects of the current year was decided; then the husbandman calculated, with all but unfailing certitude, the likelihood of plenty or scarcity; for if the waters rose but a few inches too high, they converted the plains of Egypt into pestilential morasses and marshes; if they rose too little, the fields remained a barren, dreary, and unproductive wilderness. That singular and unique river seems, indeed, to possess a truly magic power; for blessing and destruction follow its course. It will suffice, in this place, to observe, that the Nile is formed by the confluence, at Chardum in Nubia, of two rivers, the eastern Astapus, or the *Blue River* (*Bahr Asrak*), and the greater, or western branch, or the *White River* (*Bahr Abbiad*), the sources of which, though for millenniums sought by explorers and adventurers, are still hidden in the obscure deserts of tropical Africa, and remain to be discovered to satisfy the ambition of princes and scholars; that after a short northern course, it is, from the east, increased by its only tributary river, Astaboras or Tacazze; that it leaves the stony valleys of Nubia, after having ten times, terrace-like, dashed its floods over the rocks impeding its way; that it enters Egypt near Syene, where it forms its last cataract; continues its sinuous way northward through a valley between five and ten miles wide, and shut in, on both sides, by two chains of irregular mountains of sandstone, till it divides itself, not far from Cairo (at the ancient Cercasorum), in two arms, which form the Delta, and discharge their waters into the Mediterranean at Damietta and Rosetta respectively: the eastern or Arabian range of mountains is overtopped by higher granite chains; it is more precipitous, crossed by several valleys in an oblique direction, and often approaches the river so near, that the latter has scarcely more than room to pass; the valley ceases above Cairo; from this point the Libyan chain advances in a north-westerly direction towards the coast, while the Arabian range proceeds almost rectangularly eastward to the Red Sea. It may, further, be briefly stated, that the swelling of the Nile, caused by the tropical rains which fall in Ethiopia and the adjoining countries from May to September, begins in Lower Egypt about the middle of June; that the water then assumes a green or yellowish or red colour, and becomes un-

river [Nile]. 2. And, behold, there came up out of the river seven cows, fine in appearance and fat in flesh; and they fed in the reed-grass. 3. And, behold, seven other cows came up after them out of the river, bad in appearance and lean in flesh; and they stood by the *other* cows upon the bank of the river. 4. And the cows bad in appearance and lean in flesh consumed the seven cows fine in appearance and fat. And Pharaoh awoke. 5. And he slept and dreamt a second time: and, behold, seven ears of corn came up on one stalk, strong and good. 6. And,

drinkable; that it increases during the succeeding month, overflows its banks in August, and attains its greatest height in the beginning of September; so that then it resembles a sea, the towns and villages appear like islands, and the communication between the different parts of the valley is only possible by means of boats; that a height of water between sixteen and eighteen cubits is required to secure a good harvest; that the river sinks for forty or sixty days later, and resumes its usual appearance towards the end of October. The breadth of this majestic river amounts at Cairo to nearly 3,000 feet, and is navigable almost throughout the whole year. The soil of Egypt is steadily raised by the remaining slime; but the river preserves the usual relation to its banks, since its bed is also raised in an equal proportion. Hence the ancients called Lower Egypt "the gift of the Nile." The fact alluded to is attended by a remarkable consequence. A rise of eight cubits was, in the reign of king Moeris, sufficient to irrigate all Egypt below Memphis; whereas, in the time of Herodotus, about nine hundred years later, fifteen or sixteen cubits were required to overflow that part of the country; so that, if the elevation of the soil continued in the same ratio, the failure of all crops in the Delta was feared as the inevitable result. — The Delta is believed to have originally been a morass, later made habitable by means of dykes and other works; it has, even since the time of Strabo, undergone great modifications; the chief western arm of the river, which then emptied itself into the sea at Canopus, reaches it at present at Rosetta; the breadth of the Delta has, on the whole, been diminished, but the length has increased by encroachment on the sea; and the island of Pharos seems, in the age of Homer, to have been considerably more distant from the coast than in the time of Plutarch.

2—4. The circumstance, that the monarch saw seven cows emerging from the Nile, showed no less than his standing by the side of the river, that the dream had reference to the produce of the land. For the cow was the symbol of Isis, the goddess of the earth and of fertility; she was, like the bulls Apis and Mnevis, worshipped in many districts, and interdicted as food; and her acknowledged sacredness is reflected in the celebrated Greek fable of Io. The cows are here represented as amphibious; exhausted by the scorching glare of the Egyptian sun, against which the open country offers but little protection, they seek the refreshing waves of the river, and leave them only when fatigue or hunger induces them to rest or to graze on the beautiful meadows which abound on the banks.

5—7. But a second dream was necessary, in order to guarantee its reality and speedy fulfilment; and it is appropriately used to express, with still greater distinctness, the end and meaning of the vision: seven full and seven empty ears represent directly fertility and dearth; they are not, like the Nile, the cause, nor, like the cows, the symbols of vegetation, but the produce itself, the bread which formed the chief food of large portions of the Egyptians.

behold, seven ears thin and blasted by the east-wind sprang up after them. 7. And the seven thin ears devoured the seven strong and full ears. And Pharaoh awoke, and, behold, *it was* a dream.—8. And in the morning his spirit was troubled; and he sent and called for all the soothsayers of Egypt and all her wise men: and Pharaoh told them his dream; but *there was* none who could interpret them to Pharaoh. 9. Then spoke the chief butler to Pharaoh, saying, I remember my sins this day: 10. Pharaoh was angry with his servants, and gave me into custody in the

Seven ears sprouting on one stalk, clearly point to the "Egyptian wheat" (*triticum compositum*), much cultivated in the Valley of the Nile, and celebrated among the ancient nations; it constituted an essential part of the national wealth of Egypt, and was one of the principal means of subsistence of the richer classes.—The bad ears were blasted by the *east-wind*, which, blowing from the sandy steppes and deserts in the vicinity of the Red Sea, and from the Arabic peninsula, often withers the vegetation of Lower Egypt, and completely destroys the labour and the hopes of the husbandman.

8—13. Only when Pharaoh had seen two visions of an obviously similar tendency, he was moved and agitated; he then felt, that it was a dream, replete with meaning and significance, sent to foreshadow some event, or to exhort to some deed; whereas he was little concerned after the first dream which he might have regarded as the transitory offspring of wandering fancy (comp. ver. 4 and ver. 7). It cannot be surprising, that men in all ages and countries should have attached a great importance to dreams: when the functions of the soul seem fettered, and the images of the mind appear dissolved in floating phantoms, it was thought that the direct interference of the Deity alone could give strength and direction to the relaxed faculties; that if in such a state distinct and clearly circumscribed forms were perceived, they must have a higher tendency; and that their meaning is as mysterious as their origin is supernatural. Eastern nations especially, endowed as they are with a luxurious imagination, and carried away by a love of symbolism, searched the import of dreams with eager and serious anxiety. The Egyptians and Chaldeans were foremost in the cultivation of this branch of knowledge; they developed the explanation of dreams into a complete science; the interpreters of dreams were held in the most distinguished honour; they were regarded as being favoured with the highest order of wisdom, and even with divine inspiration; they surrounded the throne of the king, accompanied the expedition of the general, and often exercised a decisive influence in the most important deliberations. But the Greeks and Romans were not less scrupulous in this respect. That dreams come from Jupiter, is a maxim already pronounced by Homer; but they were considered significant only if occurring in the last third of the night, when dawn is near; persons in distress or difficulties slept in temples, in the hope of obtaining prophetic dreams which might indicate the means of rescue; men afflicted with illness, especially resorted to this expedient, in the belief that Æsculapius would reveal to them the proper remedies; and Alexander the Great actually fancied he saw, in a dream, the herb which cured the wound of Ptolemy, his friend and relation. But how deeply the faith in the reality of dreams was rooted among the ancient nations, is manifest from the views entertained by the Hebrews on this subject. Dreams occur from the

house of the chief of the guard, *both* me and the chief baker: 11. And we dreamt a dream in one night, I and he; we dreamt each according to the interpretation of his dream. 12. And there *was* with us a Hebrew youth, a servant to the chief of the guard; and we told him, and he interpreted to us our dreams: to each man he interpreted according to his dream. 13. And it happened, as he interpreted to us, so it was; I was restored to my office, and he was hanged.—14. And Pharaoh sent and

earliest to the latest books of the Bible as a means of Divine revelation, either consisting in a vision of God with a verbal address, or in a symbolical act, or in both: a dream warns Abimelech not to touch Sarah, encourages Jacob at Bethel when he fled from Canaan, promises him abundance of property, and repeats the consoling assurances when he proceeded to Egypt; a dream exhorts Laban not to injure Jacob, foretells Joseph's greatness, the destinies of the chief butler and chief baker, and the plenty and famine in Egypt; a dream indicates the victory of Gideon, permits to Solomon the choice of the gift most precious in his eyes and shows Daniel the four symbolical beasts; as, in fact, dreams are in the book of Daniel the chief vehicle of prophetic composition. Nor is the importance of dreams obscurely alluded to or left to be inferred only; it is clearly expressed in one of the most philosophical books of the Old Testament: "In the dream and vision of the night, when sleep falls upon men, in their slumber on their beds, then He reveals His will to men, and seals their warning" (Job xxxiii. 15, 16); dreams are mentioned together with prophecies and the decisions of the Urim and Thummim, although they were considered inferior to the most exalted manner of revelation by direct and open speech, vouchsafed to Moses alone; and when the Lord will pour out His spirit upon all flesh, all will see dreams, as all will prophecy (Joel iii. 1). Those, therefore, who desired to be regarded as prophets pretended to have had remarkable dreams; and impostors employed them as the most convenient means of obtaining authority among the credulous multitude. Dreams grew in importance among the Hebrews in the course of centuries, and after the Babylonian captivity, they were classified in a complete system; they were regarded either as auspicious or ominous; harassing or frightful visions were expiated by fasts and prayers; and Philo wrote an elaborate treatise, in two books, to prove that dreams are sent by God. It could not fail, that these decided notions, on a subject so vague and uncertain, caused serious abuses, chiefly from two sides; from weak-minded dreamers, who were often tortured by visionary misfortunes, and from cunning interpreters, who knew how to take advantage of such imbecility; but sometimes also, from wicked schemers, who made real or pretended dreams the pretext of base and selfish plans; as Flavius Josephus did, when, by treachery and cowardice, he saved his life by passing over into the camp of the enemies. Jesus Sirach, therefore, though acknowledging that some dreams are sent by God, censured severely the folly of attributing weight to all; he impressed upon his readers that many dreams are idle and empty, like the wind and the shadow, a delusion to the fool, and a phantom of deceitful hope; just as Artabanus had, long before, said to king Xerxes: "The visions of dreams are not divine; they most commonly hover around men respecting things which engaged their thoughts during the day"; although the superstition of his time is reflected in

called for Joseph, and they hastened to bring him out of the dungeon: and he shaved *himself*, and changed his garments, and came to Pharaoh. 15. And Pharaoh said to Joseph, I have dreamt a dream, and *there is* none who can interpret it: and I have heard say of thee, *that* thou understandest a dream to interpret it. 16. And Joseph answered Pharaoh saying, Not I: God will answer for the peace of Pharaoh.—17. And Pharaoh said to Joseph, In my dream, behold, I was standing on the bank of the

the legend which he narrated, how he yet was forced to acknowledge the awful sanctity of dreams. Nor has the interest in dreams ceased since that time; they have occupied the pen of many a modern psychologist; they have given rise to some of the most beautiful works, replete with profound thought and shrewd observation; and the peculiar mystery which surrounds those remarkable phenomena, too aerial to permit of the rigid analysis of the philosopher or the man of science, will always exercise an excusable charm over the human mind.

Thus it will be understood why Pharaoh was so seriously troubled and agitated when none of his wise men was able to interpret his striking dreams; how his impatience roused the ungrateful heart of the chief butler; and how the pride of the mighty Egyptian monarch could stoop to accept the services of a foreign slave, and hastily summon a despised prisoner into his splendid palace and before his sacred presence.

14—16. Joseph, who had borne his humiliation without despondency, heard the message of the king without surprise or timidity; the thought that the realization of his early dreams might be approaching, no doubt, flashed across his sanguine mind; but he had long since learnt to confide his life to the will of Providence, and to follow rather than to direct. He appeared before Pharaoh in becoming attire; and when he heard the cause of the king's anxiety, he answered with a dignity and self-possession proving both the superiority of his intellect and the simplicity of his character. As on a former occasion he declined every personal merit; to God, he said, belong the dreams and their interpretation; but he added, he was certain that the visions of the king would be auspicious, and that they, no doubt, foreshadowed peace and happiness: but this was no idle flattery or unmeaning compliment; the justice which the king had, two years before, evinced in the punishment of the guilty baker and the pardon of the all but innocent butler, was to Joseph a guarantee that Providence would inflict no calamity on himself or his reign. That answer could not fail to make the desired impression, and at once to prepossess Pharaoh in favour of the stranger. —The Egyptians allowed their beards to grow in mourning only; while they ordinarily never failed to shave them from their scrupulous attention to cleanliness; it was a sign either of negligent habits or of deficient education to infringe that custom, to which even foreign slaves were generally compelled to conform. The Hebrews, on the contrary, regarded their beard with peculiar pride, cultivated it with care, touched it at supplications, often swore by it, and deemed its mutilation an extreme ignominy; hence, in mourning, they shaved their beards and hair. It appears, then, that Joseph had hitherto been permitted to preserve his beard in accordance with his national customs; but that he was, of course, obliged to remove it when he was called before Pharaoh. Thus our narrative incidentally contains a genuine Egyptian trait.

17—24. Pharaoh tells Joseph his

river: 18. And, behold, there came up out of the river seven cows, fat in flesh and fine in form; and they fed in the reed-grass: 19. And, behold, seven other cows came up after them, poor and very bad in form, and lean in flesh, such as I never saw in all the land of Egypt for badness: 20. And the lean and bad cows consumed the first seven fat cows: 21. And when they had eaten them up, it could not be known that they had eaten them; for their appearance was bad, as at the beginning. And I awoke. 22. And I saw in my dream, and, behold, seven ears came up on one stalk, full and good: 23. And, behold, seven ears, parched, thin, *and* blasted by the east-wind, sprang up after them: 24. And the thin ears devoured the seven good ears: and I told *this* to the soothsayers; but *there is* none who can explain *it* to me.— 25. And Joseph said to Pharaoh, The dream of Pharaoh *is* one: God hath shown to Pharaoh what He *is* about to do. 26. The seven good cows *are* seven years; and the seven good ears *are* seven years: the dream *is* one. 27. And the seven thin and bad cows that came up after them *are* seven years; and the seven empty ears blasted by the east-

dreams with greater copiousness than they had been before stated; when the seven lean cows had devoured the seven fat ones, they remained as thin as before, and it could not be seen that they had consumed them: this feature is added, and enhances the accuracy and distinctness of the vision (see on vers. 2—4).

25—32. Joseph's interpretation, so simple and convincing, that it was at once acknowledged, not only by the king, but by his haughty, and now humbled, sages, implied a defeat of the *Egyptian gods* also, who in not suggesting to their votaries the explanation of the dreams, manifestly appeared inferior to the God of the Hebrews, either in love or in omniscience; and in order to lay due stress upon this important fact, Joseph emphatically introduces Elohim, both at the beginning and the conclusion of his reply. Elohim announces to Pharaoh what He intends to do (ver. 25); the thing is established by Elohim; and Elohim hastens to accomplish it (ver. 32). The king was compelled to revere His power (ver. 38; comp. Exod. v. 2): the first great triumph of the God of Israel over the idols of Egypt was achieved; but it was only the forerunner of greater and more signal victories.

33—36. Joseph was not satisfied with an abstract interpretation of the dreams; he not only perceived the impending calamity, but spontaneously, without awaiting the further request of the king, offered his counsel how to avert its consequences. He remained throughout faithful to his character. Its innermost nature was simplicity. It was this child-like harmlessness which had concealed from him the imprudence he committed in relating his dreams to his brothers; which had dictated his answer to Potiphar's wife;

wind will be seven years of famine. 28. This *is* the thing which I have spoken to Pharaoh: What God *is* about to do He hath shown to Pharaoh. 29. Behold, there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt: 30. And there will arise after them seven years of famine; and all the plenty will be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine will consume the land; 31. And the plenty will not be known in the land on account of that famine afterwards; for it *will be* very heavy. 32. And because the dream was repeated to Pharaoh twice, indeed, the thing *is* established by God, and God will hasten to bring it to pass. 33. Now, therefore, let Pharaoh look out a man intelligent and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt. 34. Let Pharaoh do *this*, and let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part in the land of Egypt in the seven years of plenty. 35. And let them gather all the food of those good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh, food in the cities, and keep *it*. 36. And that food shall be for store to the land against the seven years of famine, which will be in the land of Egypt; that the land do not perish

prompted him to tell the chief baker, without reserve, his approaching doom; gave him courage and calmness in appearing before Pharaoh; and which now led him to make the proposal that Pharaoh should appoint over the land of Egypt an intelligent man, capable of devising means for the accumulation of corn. He was perfectly unconscious that he thereby laid himself open to the imputation of selfishly aspiring for a most important office which he desired to create for himself. However, this wish, even had it been fostered by him, would not have been blameable, if he was convinced that the office was indispensable, and if he felt that he was able to perform, to the benefit of his generation, the duties it imposed. Ambition, if directed to noble aims, and if free from vanity and egotism, is no vice; for it manifests the love and respect entertained for our race; and the imperiousness of a haughty mind is a passion very different from that of *serving* our fellow-men, be it often with the hidden desire of earning their praise as a reward for toil and privations. — Joseph's proposal that the Egyptians should, during the seven years of plenty, deliver up the fifth part of their corn as a tax, may be considered an encroachment upon the rights of personal property; but it was his object to prevent the citizens from selling into foreign countries the cereal produce not required for immediate consumption, and thus to obviate want in the succeeding period of famine; and though an adequate compensation might, in justice, have been offered for the corn, the Egyptians scarcely expected it, as they were formerly accustomed, in ordinary years, to send the tenth part of their crops into the public granaries; and the abundance of the harvests, during the first seven years, made them scarcely feel the increase of the impost. On a later occa-

through the famine.—37. And the thing appeared good in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of all his servants. 38. And Pharaoh said to his servants, Can we find *such a man* as this *is*, a man in whom the spirit of God *is?* 39. And Pharaoh said to Joseph, Since God hath taught thee all this, *there is* none intelligent and wise like thyself: 40. Thou shalt be over my house, and all my people shall comply to thy command: only in the throne will I be greater than thou. 41. And Pharaoh said to Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt. 42. And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon

sion, we shall examine the measures of Joseph in their political and social bearings, and point out both their remarkable expediency and their great defects (see on xlvii. 13—27).

37—45. Pharaoh, certain that the spirit of God was in Joseph, appointed him to the office suggested in his answer, and installed him as his grand-vizier. Since Joseph thus obtained in the palace the position which he had before occupied in the house of Potiphar, he virtually acquired every public and social influence; for the king was the centre of all political power and administration. The whole people was, therefore, commanded to submit to Joseph's arrangements and to obey his injunctions; he was the governor and ruler of all Egypt; the throne alone was the distinguishing privilege of the king.—He at once received the insignia of his new dignity. As he was henceforth to represent the king in all public transactions, he was necessarily provided with the royal signet (see p. 423—425). As his office raised him into the highest social rank, he received garments of fine linen, the only material which, from considerations of cleanliness, the priests and other high functionaries used for their official robes. Every new dignity in the East requires corresponding garments; for the speculative mind of the Orientals invests everything with a symbolical significance; the dress especially is commonly used to embody appropriate ideas; the typical character of the vestments of the priests and of the High-priest is sufficiently known; and costly garments or dresses of honour form still a usual and acceptable present.—Egyptians of rank and eminence wore round the neck a gold chain, resembling a string, to which generally a stone scarabæus was appended. The same ornament, the *torques* of the Romans, and the *Torc* of the Britons and ancient Irish, was worn by the noble Persians and Gauls, by the Celtic tribes and other Asiatic and European nations, even in battles; and it often formed one of the chief parts of the spoil of the victorious army; soldiers received a neck-chain for their valour; and to present a warrior with the *phalaræ et torques* was a usual mode of bestowing military distinction, especially on Roman knights.—But all these private honours received a higher importance by a public procession commanded by Pharaoh; Joseph was in the second state-carriage, no doubt with all the pomp usually attending such exhibitions, presented to the people; his new dignity was proclaimed; and unqualified obedience to his commands was enforced as a duty of loyalty; and lest Joseph himself be in doubt about the character and extent of his power, the king repeated to him: "I am Pharaoh; but without thee no man shall lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt" (ver. 44).—But two other points were indispensable to complete Joseph's elevation. It was, firstly, necessary to mark the decisive epoch in his life by a new name, especially as the foreign Hebrew

Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain round his neck; 43. And he made him ride in the second chariot which he had; and they called out before him ABRECH [Governor]! namely, that he be placed over all the land of Egypt. 44. And Pharaoh said to Joseph, I *am* Pharaoh; but without thee no man shall lift up his hand or his foot in all the land of Egypt. 45. And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphenath-paneah [Rescuer of the World]; and he gave him to wife Asenath the daughter of Poti-pherah, priest of On. And Joseph went out over *all* the land of Egypt.—46. And Joseph *was*

appellation was, no doubt, objectionable to the priests, so jealous and proud of their nationality. His adoption of a new name, *Zaphenath-Paneah*, expressing his great merit and mission, stamped him, in some respects, as an Egyptian, and was regarded to indicate not merely an outward change, but a corresponding internal transformation, and almost the commencement of a new existence. In order to make this transition still more decided and permanent, Pharaoh, secondly, gave him to wife Asenath, the daughter of Potipherah, priest of On. This alliance introduced him into one of the noblest and most influential Egyptian families; for the power of the chief priest was immense; his office, surrounded with a dazzling prestige, was hereditary in his family, and gave a dignified stability to his position. The priests belonged to the great landed proprietors; they formed the highest aristocracy; they attended and controlled the kings; and the statues of the chief priests were, like those of the Pharaohs, placed in the temples of the gods. If one of the priests, proverbial for their scrupulousness in guarding the purity of their families, conquered his aversion, and married his daughter to a stranger and a slave, the most powerful example was set for the other Egyptians to banish their prejudices and readily to acknowledge Joseph's authority. But if policy recommended this union, it might appear that religion as strongly condemned it: how could Joseph marry an idolatrous wife? Had he forgotten the anxious care which his father and his ancestors had taken to uphold the undefiled legitimacy of their race? It is impossible, in this place, to answer that question fully and satisfactorily; it is intimately connected with another difficulty to which we shall presently allude, and the explanation of which will assist us in elucidating this point also (see on vers. 50—52). But it may be here observed, that, indeed, in Joseph's later progeny the evil consequences of this idolatrous marriage are reflected; the Ephraimites always displayed a fatal inclination in favour of Egyptian paganism; the service of Apis long disgraced their sacred places; and threatened to rival the imageless worship of the God of Israel. On the other hand, Joseph might have hoped, in spite of that alliance, to preserve in his house the knowledge and pure service of God; he trusted to the innate force of truth and to the energy of his will, that they would repress, if they could not eradicate, the folly and error of his wife's religious notions. His prudence and his wisdom seem to have effected what would almost appear hopeless; we see nowhere in his domestic affairs a tendency towards paganism; in giving names to his sons he employs both times the name of Elohim; and when his father arrives in Egypt, there appears between them no alienation, no difference of opinions.

46—49. The first part of Pharoah's dream began at once to be realised. The soil yielded enormous harvests, and in ac-

thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh, king of Egypt.—And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt. 47. And in the seven years of plenty the earth brought forth in heaps. 48. And he gathered up all the food of the seven years, which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities; the food of the field, which *was* round every city, he laid up in it. 49. And Joseph piled up corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he ceased numbering; for *it was* without number.—50. And to Joseph were born two sons before the years of famine came, whom Asenath the daughter of Poti-pherah, priest

cordance with Joseph's directions, stores of corn, infinite and numberless, were piled up in the cities. Perhaps no nation was so fond of writing down everything as the Egyptians; on the monuments we seldom fail to discover some officer or servant with his writing materials, engaged in taking minute notes of the proceedings delineated; the account-books of private individuals were generally as exact and voluminous as the public archives were complete and circumstantial; and in the various departments of the house and the field, and in the trades and manufactures, the same care was exhibited. Now, the corn was so plentiful in the seven years of abundance, that the Egyptians, though generally accustomed to keep regular accounts of the sheaves, became weary of numbering them; and they contented themselves with piling up the corn "like the sand of the sea."—The astonishing increase of Egyptian corn in ancient times has lately received a very curious and unexpected confirmation. Five grains of wheat, found in an old Egyptian tomb, were, in France, sown in 1849, and the first year is said to have given a yield of 1,200 for 1. In 1853, comparative experiments were made in different parts of France; some of the seed sown rough in one half of a field near Morlaix, gave a produce of 60 for 1, while the ordinary French corn, in the other half of the ground, gave 15 for 1. When sown grain by grain in a line, it yielded more than 556 for 1; and these surprising results induced many agriculturists to secure and largely to sow the precious grains.

50—52. Joseph became the father of two sons; but these joyful occasions awakened within him melancholy reminiscences: when he surveyed the past, he felt deeply the sacrifices by which he had purchased his honourable and distinguished position; he had not only suffered unspeakable agony and degradation; he had not only been exposed to the imminent danger of death; but he had been wrested from his father's arms, torn from the fondest associations which gladden the soul and the heart, and transplanted into a soil not his own, thrown among a nation not speaking his tongue. The birth of his eldest son at last renewed in him the feelings of his youth; he saw himself once more in the midst of his own family; and he began to enjoy again domestic happiness. And when a second son was born to him, though rejoicing at his increasing personal felicity, he could not forget, that he was in a land of strangers, and that Egypt was still to him "the country of his exile": so deep was his attachment to his relations; so indestructible was his love. But as such was the case, it must be asked with astonishment: why did he not send to Hebron, to cheer the sorrowful heart of his aged father by informing him of his own brilliant station? Did not even ordinary filial duty demand this course? However, let us remember the character

of On, bore to him. 51. And Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh: For God, *said he*, hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house. 52. And the name of the second he called Ephraim: For, *said he*, God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction.—53. And the seven years of plenty which was in the land of Egypt were finished; 54. And the seven years of famine began to come, as Joseph had said: and the famine was in all the lands; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread. 55. And when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread: and Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, Go to

and tendency of Joseph's history. It is designed to teach the wonderful interference of Divine Providence; to show that man is carried along, whilst he imagines to guide; and that he suffers, whilst he means to act. Joseph is everywhere an instrument for the accomplishment of Divine decrees, the aim and end of which had been foretold to him in his early dreams, which he knew would be realised in the fulness of time, and which he was not allowed impatiently to accelerate; he was certain, that not his brothers, but God had brought him to Egypt; and to God, therefore, he left the sole agency and guidance. — But another reason made him hesitate to send that joyful message. It would have compelled him to raise a terrible accusation against his brothers; his father, in regaining one son, would morally have lost nearly all the rest; he would have felt endless torture at the unnatural tyranny and mean hypocrisy of those who surrounded him; new and deeper wounds would have been inflicted upon him, when the old ones were nearly healing; therefore, Joseph trusted to Time and to the invisible hand of Providence to work by imperceptible steps. These considerations will also serve to explain the question concerning Joseph's marriage with the daughter of a heathen priest. He had been sent to Egypt to accomplish there a great mission; he was selected to devise means for the rescue of many nations; he felt it his duty to profit by every circumstance that might promote this result; but a marriage with an humble virgin from the race of Terah would have injured his mission as decidedly in the eyes of the Egyptians, as his alliance with the noble daughter of an influential priest necessarily advanced it: and Joseph scrupled as little to accept the hand of Asenath which Pharaoh offered to him, as the pious Mordecai, many centuries later, hesitated to permit the marriage of his ward Esther with a heathen king, because she might possibly have been destined as an instrument of salvation in a great emergency (Esth. iv. 14).

53—57. When the years of abundance had elapsed, and the period of scarcity commenced, the provident and comprehensive arrangements of Joseph were recognised in all their admirable wisdom. Famines in Egypt are not without example; and historians have furnished us with fearful descriptions of the horrors which they brought in their train. But it is certainly more than unusual, that in that blessed land, where the Nile rises almost with the necessity of a natural phenomenon, producing the richest fertility and plenty, scanty crops should follow for seven successive years; it is indeed still more remarkable, that the same calamity should, during the same period, occur "in all countries" (ver. 54), or "on the whole surface of the earth" (ver. 56); for these words utterly exclude the inter-

Joseph; what he saith to you, do. 56. And the famine was over all the face of the earth. And Joseph opened all *the storehouses* in which there was *corn*, and sold *it* to the Egyptians: and the famine became great in the land of Egypt. 57. And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph to buy *corn*; for the famine was great in all countries.

pretation, that the drought was limited to the countries adjoining Egypt, as Nubia, Arabia, and Syria; it is, further, strange and surprising, that the harvest of one year of abundance in Egypt should be sufficient for the subsistence of all the inhabitants of the earth during the same time: yet in dwelling upon these and similar difficulties, we must remember, that they escaped the author of the Pentateuch as little as the modern critics; but that it was his intention to introduce *extraordinary* and *miraculous* occurrences, which naturally evade the test of a critical analysis; since it was only by the prediction and realisation of some *unusual* event, that the *inspiration* and *prophetic gift* of Joseph could be displayed (comp. l. 24, 25, and on xlvii. 13—27).

CHAPTER XLII.

1. And Jacob saw that there was purchase *of corn* in Egypt; and Jacob said to his sons, Why do you look one upon another? 2. And he said, Behold,

1—17. More than twenty years had elapsed since Joseph's separation from his family; and during this long interval one domestic incident only is recorded to have occurred in the house of Jacob (ch. xxxviii.); the centre of the scene lies no more in the tents of the father, but in the palaces of the son; and the events take a character so exclusively Egyptian, that we should fear to lose sight entirely of the further destinies of the aged patriarch, did not the skill hitherto displayed in the narrative afford us the guarantee that the connection between the past and the future will not be unnaturally broken off, and that the discrepancy of the preceding history will be fully reconciled. But instead of dilating upon what must be obvious to every reader at first glance, we deem it preferable to give a few comprehensive outlines regarding the internal organism of the tale, to point out the doctrines which it enshrines, and to show the art, the surprising unity, and the thoughtful depth of the composition. The two following chapters are, of course, also included in this sketch.

The most striking feature in Joseph's conduct is its *duplicity*. On the one hand, he treats his brothers not only harshly, but cruelly and heartlessly. As soon as he recognises them, his natural quickness of determination suggests to him a line of conduct which he pursues with almost inexorable consistency. His first care was to deceive them about his identity. To gain this end, it was, above all, necessary that they should believe him to be an Egyptian; he endeavoured, therefore, strictly to maintain the Egyptian colouring; and in this he succeeded in an eminent degree. He is almost more Egyptian than the Egyptians themselves; he acts not only in accordance with their manners, but imitates their character

I have heard that there is purchase *of corn* in Egypt: go down thither, and buy *corn* for us from there; that we may live, and not die. 3. And Joseph's ten brothers went down to buy corn in Egypt. 4. But Benjamin, Joseph's *full* brother, Jacob did not send with his brothers; for he said, Perhaps a misfortune might befall

with marvellous accuracy; he receives his brothers with suspicion, which is so prominent a characteristic of the Egyptians in their intercourse with foreigners; he calls them spies intent upon exploring the weakness of the land; he enquires curiously into their domestic affairs; he swears repeatedly by the life of Pharaoh; he is arbitrary and despotic; he is not ashamed of irrational and absurdly illogical conclusions; for he whimsically proposes to consider it a proof of the brothers' honesty, if they bring Benjamin with them, or else they are impostors and traitors of the land; with truly Pharaonic self-will, he throws them into the dungeon, and releases them without enquiry or examination, but retains one of them; he treats with them through the medium of an interpreter; he does not eat with them at the same table, places the Egyptians also at a separate board, and sends from his seat the viands to the brothers; he does not recline, but *sits* at dinner; he assumes the pompous authority of an Egyptian sage, and speaks with the haughty grandiloquence of an Egyptian prince; he pretends to know what is secret; he prophesies from a sacred goblet; and declares the attempt at deceiving him, the omniscient soothsayer, an arrogant infatuation. So great exertions does he make to ensnare his brothers. But this mask is only a means for carrying out his plans without impediment; and he plays his part with a mastery which does as much credit to his head as it seems to disgrace his heart: he receives and addresses his brothers with an unbrotherly vehemence; he overwhelms them from the commencement with apprehension and terror; he remembers his dreams, sees them realised, and apparently wishes to enjoy his triumph with cold and selfish gratification; he attacks his brothers with the formidable accusation of high-treason; he seems to delight in their anguish; and when they preserve sufficient self-possession to attempt a defence, and his flat contradictions lose their force by the calmness of their conscience, he bluntly cuts short their explanations and arguments, and commands them with impetuous protestations to bring their youngest brother before him. Without awaiting their reply, he incarcerates them; leaves them in agonizing uncertainty for three days; and then, cruelly binding Simeon before the eyes of the others, dismisses the latter to Canaan. He throws them into new consternation by making them appear embezzlers of the royal treasury. At their second visit to Egypt, he excruciates them with fear by sending them into his palace without informing them of his intentions; and instead of at last concluding the cold-hearted play at the repast prepared for them, he devises a new stratagem with almost demoniac cruelty. Knowing that the hearts of his brothers are set upon Benjamin's welfare, he wishes to retain him alone; and he carries his unfeeling tyranny so far, that he drives Judah, who had pledged himself for Benjamin's safety, to the utmost extremity of manly boldness.

But these traits are, on the other hand, mixed with features of a very different nature: together with his roughness, Joseph exhibits such unmistakeable symptoms of a sympathising heart, that we are obliged to pause, and to seek a clue to his enigmatical conduct: he cannot suppress his tears when he sees the repentance of his afflicted brothers and hears the confession of their guilt; he is compelled to turn away from them, to conceal his overwhelming emotions (ver. 24); he orders provisions to be

him. 5. And the sons of Israel came to buy *corn* among those that came: for the famine was in the land of Canaan. 6. And Joseph *was* the governor over the land, *it was* he who sold *corn* to all the people of the land: and Joseph's brothers came, and prostrated themselves before him *with* their faces to the ground. 7. And Joseph saw his brothers,

gratuitously given to them for the journey; he cannot bear the thought of accepting money from them for the necessaries of life, and makes thus his official duty subservient to the impulse of his heart; his fervent and almost passionate love for his father and for Benjamin, breaks forth in nearly every part of the transactions; he has scarcely seen Benjamin, when he orders the brothers to be conducted into his house; he instructs his steward to treat them mildly, and to calm their anxieties; he speaks to them with heart-winning cordiality; his feelings overpower him; he is obliged to hasten into another apartment, to soften by tears the vehemence of his affection; "he refrains himself, till he is unable to refrain himself any longer"; and he makes himself known to his brothers with the most loving, the most touching tenderness.

This remarkable duplicity, irreconcileable as it may appear at first glance, is perfectly explained, if we survey Joseph's history as a whole.

The brothers had committed against him a great and unnatural sin; adequate punishment necessarily awaited them; — *and Joseph was chosen to be the judge and the avenger.* He is, to his brothers the retaliating Providence; he holds in his hand the rod of justice; and he is *compelled* to lift it against them. Not without deep design the text remarks almost at the very beginning, that he remembered his dreams (ver. 9): this notice leads us at once to the proper sphere of the scenes here developed; for it teaches, that the following events possess a close and internal connection with the past; and that they complete what was before commenced. The dreams of Joseph were a chief incentive for the misdeed of the brothers; but, in their realisation, the crime was both punished and expiated; and lest there remain any doubt, the victim himself was charged to dispense the punishment. Joseph's heart bled, indeed, in the exercise of this stern and dire office; he required the whole strength of his energetic mind to steel himself against the impetuous partiality of his feeling: for it demands the Divine Reason, calm, immoveable, and justly balancing, to perform the task of Judge; while the human heart is inclined to show pity where pity is a weakness. To the brothers, the mystery of his person was like the secret working of Providence; he appeared to them the impersonation of punishing Justice; their guilt-laden conscience awoke in his presence like a tormenting recollection; it raised aloud the terrible accusation against them and their iniquitous offence; they spontaneously confessed their trespass before him; they were convinced beyond a doubt, that their present agonies were the deserved retribution for that wickedness; and so deeply were they impressed with this sentiment, that they believed Joseph's blood was then demanded back, and that they feared the infliction of death, which, in the sincerity of their repentance, they thought they had deserved (vers. 21, 22). But death would have been an unjust punishment. For, on the one hand, they had, in reality, only sold, not killed Joseph; and, on the other hand, they had, by a deep consciousness of their enormous crime, when they saw their father's outburst of grief, made the most decided step towards atonement; "God does not desire the death of the sinner, but that he return from his way and live"; and the fact, that their internal struggle was kept alive during a period of twenty-two years, to break forth anew on any occasion, proves the earnestness of

and he recognised them, but made himself strange to them, and spoke roughly to them; and he said to them, From where do you come? And they said, From the land of Canaan to buy *corn for* food. 8. And Joseph recognised his brothers, but they did not recognise him. 9. And Joseph remembered the dreams which he had dreamt of

their contrition: when they found the money in their sacks, they exclaimed: "What is this that God hath done to us"? (ver. 28); and when the goblet was discovered in the sack of Benjamin, Judah meekly observed: "What shall we say? what shall we speak? or how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants" (xliv. 16). But though death would have been unjustly severe, *fear* of death, such as they had made Joseph feel innocently, was their commensurate chastisement.

But we cannot evade another difficulty. It seems indisputably clear, that Joseph, by his obstinate and apparently fanciful request to see Benjamin in Egypt, almost designedly tormented his aged father. Why did he require from him so great a sacrifice? And was his longing for his father less strong than for his younger brother? Why did he, therefore, not demand, that they should both appear together?

It has been observed before, that Joseph's history is introduced as an integral part of the life of Jacob; and that from this reason it commences with the words: "These are the generations of Jacob: Joseph was seventeen years old" (xxxvii. 1; see p. 409). Now, though Jacob, in the symbolical struggle with a higher power, had purified himself from his *sins*, he had retained the *weakness* of *visibly* preferring Joseph to his other children; especially because he was a son of the beloved Rachel, whom he called emphatically his wife (ver. 38; xliv. 27); and it was partly for that injustice and imprudence that he had so severely been punished with the loss of Joseph (see p. 410). But so far from being corrected by this misfortune, he now clung with still greater tenacity to Benjamin, Rachel's second son, loving him with an ardour which left him but little affection for his other sons; for him alone he feared danger on the journey to Egypt; he pleaded his tender age, although he was at least thirty years old, and appears, in the following year, as the father of ten children (xlvi. 21); he trembled at the possibility of an accident that might befall him; and if Benjamin were taken from him, he apprehended that his old age would, in grief and sorrow, sink into the grave. But still more; when Simeon was kept fettered in Egypt, and Jacob could save him by sending Benjamin, he refused it long, and with the most violent protestations of pain; he seemed almost indifferent to the fate of his second son; his firstborn, Reuben, proposed to leave his sons as pledges, but Jacob declined the offer; and it was only when Judah, with irresistible energy, urged that by these refusals they were all exposed to the danger of perishing by starvation, and he himself became a surety for Benjamin's life, that Jacob consented, though with expressions of heart-rending despair (xliii. 14). Such deep root had that blameable weakness taken in Jacob's mind. It was necessary that it should be eradicated; this alone was wanting to complete his moral education: and Joseph was again destined to exercise this function; he was once more the medium of the dispensing justice of God. It must not be deemed surprising, that the *son* was chosen to reform the *father*: Joseph had, in this instance, an exceptional right; that fault of his father had kindled the hatred of the brothers, had brought him into danger of death, and thrown him into servitude and imprisonment. When he, therefore, did not see Benjamin among the brothers, his suspicion was at once awakened; his questions eli-

them, and said to them, You *are* spies; to see the nakedness of the land you are come. 10. And they said to him, No, my lord, but to buy *corn for* food are thy servants come. 11. We *are* all one man's sons; we *are* true *men;* thy servants are no spies. 12. And he said to them, No, but to see the nakedness of the land you are come. 13. And they said, Thy servants *are* twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan: and, behold, the youngest *is* this day

cited information which soon banished every doubt (comp. xliv. 20); and what the answers did not reveal, was inferred by his shrewdness and penetration. Now, as in the treatment of the brothers, so with regard to this point also, his resolution was formed with unhesitating rapidity. He insisted upon Benjamin's journey to Egypt, and demanded it with inexplicable vehemence; but what necessarily appeared to the brothers despotic arbitrariness, was, in reality, the result of a wise plan and profound reflection: he desired, that one of their number should go to Canaan to bring down Benjamin; but all rejected this demand with indignation and abhorrence; for none dared to propose it to Jacob; and they preferred perpetual incarceration. This firmness on the part of the brothers, was to Joseph another corroboration that his conjectures regarding the undue predilection of Jacob in favour of Benjamin, were but too well founded; and he considered it his duty to persevere in his demand with the greater determination. After three days, he dismissed nine of the brothers, and kept back Simeon alone; for he wished to ascertain, if his father was more afflicted by a *possible* accident of Benjamin, than by the *real* misery and lasting servitude of Simeon; it was necessary to test, if partiality still disturbed the equipoise of Jacob's love: and, hence, Joseph was severe almost to relentlessness. But Jacob was at last compelled to yield to the force of circumstances; though his heart seemed to break, he tore Benjamin from his fond embrace, and confided him to the faithful care of Judah. He finally conquered himself; he achieved the crowning victory over the weakness of his nature; *Jacob* was at length entirely *Israel*; his internal training thus reached the last stage; sin, repentance, and punishment had succeeded each other; the fourth and happiest period of his life, undisturbed enjoyment and peace, then awaited him. Eleven of his sons returned to Hebron, and surprised him with the report of the life and distinguished eminence of the twelfth: for only after he had obtained that triumph over himself, was he worthy of receiving such cheering intelligence; then only he was permitted to rise from the deepest distress of the soul to its purest felicity.

But we may be allowed briefly to advert to the usual explanation of this part of our narrative. It is asserted, that Joseph's object in demanding the presence of Benjamin, was to prove the *brothers*, and to convince himself, whether they would treat Benjamin, the father's cherished favourite, with the same vile jealousy which they had displayed against himself twenty-two years since; whether their hearts were still filled with envy; and whether, therefore, they deserved to obtain his pardon. But this view is open to important objections. First, even its advocates admit, that Joseph, perfectly at variance with his natural sagacity, would thus have ventured on a most dangerous experiment, possibly imperilling the life of his beloved brother, and loading upon himself a heavy guilt of conscience. But, secondly, that experiment would have been entirely superfluous. A total change in the sentiments of the brothers, is abundantly evident in every part of the recorded transactions. They are so far from jealousy, that they truly vie with each other in devoted love; they pledge themselves for Benjamin's safety with their own lives and those of their children; they have no other

with our father, and one *is* no more. 14. And Joseph said to them, That *is* what I spoke to you, saying, You *are* spies: 15. Hereby you shall be proved: by the life of Pharaoh, you shall not go forth hence, except your youngest brother come hither. 16. Send one of you, and let him fetch your brother, and you shall be kept in prison, that your words may be proved, whether *there be any* truth in you: or else, by the life of Pharaoh, surely you

desire but that of removing every grief from their aged father, and of protecting their youngest brother; they even express their contrition about their past crime, with touching words, in the presence of Joseph; *and Joseph understands their speech*; affection, resignation, honesty, and fervent piety, seem alone to reign in their hearts; all this was clearly perceived by Joseph, and strikes still more forcibly every reader of this beautiful tale. And suppose the brothers had succumbed in the trial? How could Joseph later meet his father? Or would he, in that case, for ever have renounced the happiness of seeing him again? How could he ever recover the peace of his heart? It is, in fact, impossible, that he should have intended to test his brothers.

After these general remarks, a brief exposition of the individual parts of this section will be sufficient.

The accusation of spying with which Joseph received his brothers, is certainly not unusual in the East. It has been a fruitful source of vexation and annoyance even to modern travellers; and is not unfrequently made the pretext for violent extortions. But the fear of stratagem and treachery is natural in countries where defence and fortification are either difficult or impossible; and guests from Canaan were not likely to be surprised to hear such a charge from the lips of an Egyptian dignitary; for Egypt was, during a very long period, from the east and north-east, exposed to hostile attacks and invasions; the boundaries of the land were uncertain; and the deserts and mountains on the eastern side, facilitated the daring schemes of conquering tribes.—Joseph was as active as he was wise; his elevated station did not tempt him to indolence or effeminacy; anxious to prevent the avaricious oppressions and arbitrary dealings of subordinate officials, he personally superintended the sale of corn at least in the capital of the realm; his interest was, no doubt, doubly excited by the arrival of strangers from Canaan, the abode of his family; and when he recognised his brothers among the purchasers, what was more natural than that he should at once treat with them directly without the intercession of an inferior functionary? There is, then, nothing surprising in the circumstance that Joseph, the grand-vizier of Egypt, "should transact business with simple tradesmen from Canaan."—Determined to torment and to harass his brothers, he exclaimed: "By the life of Pharaoh, you shall not go forth hence, except your youngest brother come hither" (ver. 15). Men naturally swear by what they regard as most powerful, most precious, or most sacred. In despotic countries, therefore, where the king is not only the sum total of worldly power, but generally surrounds his person with divine authority, and where he is worshipped rather than served; the most solemn oath is that taken by the head, or the life, or the hearth and throne of the monarch: a violation of such profession is considered the most criminal form of high-treason, involving a manifest contempt for the most binding political and religious duties; and hence death was its irrevocable penalty. Not the eastern nations alone swore, as they swear still, by the life of the king; the Romans also, in the time of their moral and political degradation, took the oath *per genium principis*; and that atrocious monster, Caligula, put to

are spies. 17. And he put them all together in custody three days.—18. And Joseph said to them on the third day, This do, and live; *for* I fear God: 19. If you *are* true *men*, let one of your brothers be imprisoned in the house of your custody; and you go, carry corn for the famine of your houses: 20. But bring your youngest brother to me; then will your words be verified, and you shall not die. And they did so. 21. And they said one to another, We *are* verily guilty concerning our brother; for we saw the anguish of his soul when he implored us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us. 22. And Reuben answered them, saying, Did I not say to you, saying, Do not sin against the child, and you would not hear? Therefore, behold, his blood is required. 23. And they knew not that Joseph understood *them;* for an interpreter *was* between them. 24. And he turned away from them, and wept; and he came back to them, and spoke to them, and took from them Simeon, and bound

death persons for having omitted to employ it: whereas the usual oaths among the Hebrews were "by the Lord the Most High"; by the covenant of God (xxiv. 2); by the love of the parents; by the help of the Lord; by the eternity of God and the life of the soul; or "as the Lord liveth who gave us this soul"; which expressions, showing more clearly than elaborate dissertations, what the Hebrews prized, loved, and feared most, are a beautiful proof of the purity of their notions, and the earnestness of their thoughts. But it is not surprising that the Hebrews confirmed an energetic declaration by invoking the life of the person to whom it was addressed.—The oath or protestation "by the life of the king" remained for millenniums later customary in Egypt.

18—24. When the brothers, after their imprisonment, were again brought before Joseph, he astonished them by exclaiming that he feared God. They might well wonder that the governor of Egypt, the land of animal worship, should know and revere the only God of the Hebrews; but a mysterious spell surrounded the remarkable individual who inspired them with unaccountable awe; and that declaration at once opened their hearts and their lips to a soul-stirring confession of their guilt.—Simeon was bound; for it is not unlikely that he, the man of violence and blood, the ruthless plunderer of Shechem, had taken a prominent part in the barbarous deed committed at Dothan; whereas it would have been a glaring wrong to detain in prison the elder Reuben, who, by his prudent interference, had averted the murder of Joseph; who had offered his own two sons as pledges for Benjamin's safe return; and who now, in the very presence of Joseph, pathetically reminded the brothers of his ineffectual efforts to save him from their malice. It has been asserted that Joseph was afraid to lay his hand on Reuben, because the person of the first-born was inviolable; but priority of birth alone would not have shielded him. Though primogeniture had its privileges, it had its duties also. Had he been as wicked as his brothers, he would have been the most culpable of all: the accident

him before their eyes.—25. And Joseph commanded to fill their utensils with corn, and to restore every man's money into his sack, and to give them provisions for the way: and thus was done to them. 26. And they lifted their purchased corn upon their asses, and departed thence. 27. And when one *of them* opened his sack to give his ass provender at the halting-place, he saw his money; for, behold, it *was* in the mouth of his bag. 28. And he said to his brothers, My money hath been returned; and, behold, *it is* in my sack: and their hearts failed *them*, and they turned with trembling one to another, saying, What *is* this *that* God hath done to us?—29. And they came to Jacob their father, to the land of Canaan, and told him all that had befallen them, saying, 30. The man, *who is* the lord of the land, spoke roughly to us, and took us for spies of the country. 31. And we said to him, We *are* true *men;* we are no spies: 32. We *are* twelve brothers, sons of our father; one *is* no more, and the youngest *is* this day

of birth did not blindly decide among the Hebrews; Jacob was preferred to Esau, because he was more spiritual in his thoughts and aims; and Reuben himself lost the prerogatives of the firstborn, because he had polluted the sanctity of his house (comp. on chap. xlviii.).

25—28. Whether Joseph had a right, from personal considerations, to deprive the royal exchequer of the money which he returned in the sacks of the brothers, or whether he obtained the permission of the king, or reimbursed the amount from his private property, are questions which the text evidently evades, in order to show the strength of Joseph's feelings, which, in this instance, perhaps overruled his reason; he could not master his repugnance to accepting payment for the staff of life from the members of his family; and he adroitly made this sentiment subservient to his plans for terrifying the brothers: in no deed, therefore, is the duplicity of his conduct more strikingly obvious.—The brothers came to Egypt on asses, as later Moses and his family (Exod. iv. 20). Modern critics have declared this notice to possess very little probability, as the Egyptians abhorred asses, on account of their colour. But this assertion is completely overthrown by the monumental records. Asses are very frequently and very numerously represented; the Egyptian species is notoriously one of the most excellent and valuable; for asses thrive best in dry regions, and rain is extremely rare in Egypt; almost every Egyptian possessed some of those most useful animals, and employed them for various domestic and agricultural purposes (comp. Exod. ix. 3). They were certainly, in a religious sense, considered as *unclean*, and were, therefore, usually employed for sacrifices offered to the evil demon, Typhon; but as this did not render them so abominated as to exclude their extensive breeding in Egypt, it cannot be surprising that strangers from Canaan should use them at occasional visits (see on Exod. pp. 57, 111).

29 — 34. As the brothers returned without Simeon, they were compelled at once to communicate to Jacob, not only the inhospitable reception which they had experienced at the hands of the severe

with our father in the land of Canaan. 33. And the man, the lord of the country, said to us, Hereby shall I know that you *are* true *men;* leave one of your brothers *here* with me, and take *food for* the famine of your house*holds*, and go; 34. And bring your youngest brother to me: then I shall know that you *are* no spies, but *that* you *are* true *men*; I shall deliver to you your brother, and you may trade in the land.—35. And when they emptied their sacks, behold, every man's bundle of money *was* in his sack: and when *both* they and their father saw their bundles of money, they were afraid. 36. And Jacob their father said to them, You have bereaved me *of my children:* Joseph *is* no more, and Simeon *is* no more, and you will take Benjamin *away:* all this cometh upon me. 37. And Reuben said to his father, saying, Thou mayest kill my two sons, if I do not bring him to thee: deliver him into my hand, and I will restore him to thee. 38. And he said, My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he alone is left *to me*: if an accident befall him on the way in which you go, then you will bring down my grey hair with sorrow into the grave.

ruler of Egypt, but also his imperious demand with regard to Benjamin — a request which they knew would vehemently afflict their father, and which they gladly would have withheld as long as possible. Whether they really concealed from him the fact of their unjust imprisonment to save him an unnecessary pang, or whether it is only omitted in the brevity of the narrative, we have no grounds for deciding: but this neglect certainly does not imply a contradiction. It might, further, appear that the brothers told Joseph spontaneously of their father and their youngest brother (ver. 11); whereas it is evident, from a later part of the narrative, that they did so only on the express and decided interrogation of Joseph (xliii. 6, 7).

35—38. When Jacob saw the money in the sacks of his sons, his most serious apprehensions were roused; he considered that circumstance as decidedly ominous, since it clearly seemed to prove the ill-will of the Egyptian officials; and now at last fearing for the life of Simeon, he was determined not to risk that of Benjamin. In the violence of his sorrow, he addressed to his sons the almost prophetic words: "you have bereaved me of my children"; he considered Simeon as no less irrevocably lost than Joseph; yet he pertinaciously refused to adopt the only course by which he could reclaim the former. Reuben, again actuated by true and brotherly love, and wishing to save Simeon, offered his two sons as guarantees for Benjamin, and with almost exaggerated ardour, permitted them to be killed unless he fulfilled his pledges. But Jacob did not accept the proposal; his heart felt for his younger son only; and he exclaimed, in bitter agonies, that he would never survive his death or his injury.

CHAPTER XLIII.

1. And the famine *was* heavy in the land. 2. And when they had entirely eaten up the purchase *of corn* which they had brought out of Egypt, their father said to them, Go again, buy *corn* for us for a little food. 3. And Judah said to him, saying, The man solemnly protested to us, saying, You shall not see my face, except your brother *be* with you. 4. If thou wilt send our brother with us, we will go down and buy for thee *corn for* food: 5. But if thou wilt not send *him*, we shall not go down: for the man said to us, You shall not see my face, except your brother *be* with you. 6. And Israel said, Wherefore have you done evil to me, to tell the man whether you had yet a brother? 7. And they said, The man asked us closely about ourselves, and about our kindred, saying, *Is* your father yet alive? have you *another* brother? and we told him in accordance with these words: could we indeed know that he would say, Bring your brother down? 8. And Judah said to Israel his father, Send the youth with me, and we will rise and go; that we may live, and not die, both we, and thou, and our little ones. 9. I will be surety for him;

1—10. Months elapsed; and the stores which the brothers had brought from Egypt were exhausted, while the dearth of the land continued. But Jacob persevered in his blameable partiality for Benjamin, till Judah's powerful and imposing eloquence, representing that all would wretchedly perish by hunger, at last shook him from his unavailing lamentations, and restored him to calmness and reason.

11—14. Jacob then acting with the same prudence which, about thirty years before, had urged him to conciliate Esau's anger by presents, charged his sons to take of the choicest fruits of Canaan, and to offer the gifts to the austere viceroy of Egypt. The productions specified by him were balsam, honey, tragacanth, ladanum, pistachio-nuts, and almonds. Three of them have been mentioned before among those imported into Egypt by the caravan of the Midianites (see on xxxvii. 25), and we add here a few remarks on the three other articles.

The *grape-honey*, which the Arabians call *Dibs*, and the Persians *Dushab*, is, according to Pliny, a product of art, and not of nature; for it is prepared from must boiled down to one third; in this case, it was called by the Romans *sirœum* or *sapa*; but sometimes the must was boiled down to one-half only, and then the grape-jelly so formed bore the name *defrutum*. According to the same author, the proper season for boiling *defrutum* is the equinox, "on a night when there is no moon; or, if it is a full moon, in the day-time." It was mixed with milk or wine, and employed for preserving fruits; the former mixture is called by Festus "red drink." The *Dibs* is still prepared in many parts of Syria and Palestine, especially in the neighbourhood of Hebron, and is in great quantities exported into Egypt. Diluted with a little water, it is

of my hand thou mayest demand him: if I do not bring him to thee, and place him before thee, then I will have sinned against thee for ever: 10. For if we had not lingered, surely we had now returned twice.—11. And their father Israel said to them, If *it is* so indeed, do this; take of the choicest fruits of the land in your utensils, and carry down to the man a present, a little balsam, and a little honey, tragacanth, and ladanum, pistachio-nuts, and almonds: 12. And take other money in your hand; and the money that was returned in the mouth of your bags, take *it* back in your hand; perhaps it *was* a mistake: 13. Take also your brother, and rise, go again to the man: 14. And may God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send with you your other brother, and Benjamin: and I, as I am bereaved, I am bereaved.—15. And the men took that present, and they took double money in their hand, and Benjamin; and they rose, and went down to Egypt, and stood before Joseph. 16. And when Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the steward of his house, Bring *these* men into the house, and kill, and make ready; for *these* men shall dine with me at noon. 17. And the man did as Joseph had ordered; and the man brought

frequently used instead of sugar, or as a substitute for butter; and sometimes it is applied to wounds instead of wine. The same product is, in the book of Ezekiel (xxvii. 17), likewise mentioned together with balm, and is there stated to have been sent from the land of Israel to the markets of Tyre. As Egypt abounds in excellent bee-honey, but was perhaps unacquainted with the preparation of grape-jelly, the latter was appropriately chosen as a part of Jacob's present.

The pistachio-tree, the *Pistacia vera* of Linnæus, produces nuts of an oval form, of the size of hazel-nuts, ripening in October. These *pistachio-nuts* were, and are still, a favourite fruit in the east; their spicy taste is most palatable to Orientals; they are either eaten dry or preserved, and are extensively exported to many countries where the tree is not indigenous. They were the more valued as the kernel, if taken either in food or drink, was believed to strengthen the stomach, and to be a specific against the bite of serpents. The pistachio-tree is, on the whole, neither far-spread nor much cultivated; but it is most frequent in Palestine and Syria, especially around Aleppo (near the ancient Berœa), in Persia, and so far eastward as Bactria; it was at a late period introduced into Italy and Spain, and grows sporadically in Sicily and Calabria. From Affghanistan the seeds are carried to India, where they are eaten both by natives and Europeans, either uncooked or added to sweetmeats. But the pistachio does not seem to have grown in Egypt. It thrives best in dry and almost rocky soil; it is of very slow growth; male and female flowers are on separate trees; and in this, as in several other points, it resembles the terebinth

the men into Joseph's house. 18. And the men were afraid, because they were brought into Joseph's house; and they said, On account of the money that was returned in our bags at the first time are we brought in; that he may throw himself upon us, and fall upon us, and take us for bondmen, and our asses. 19. And they approached the steward of Joseph's house, and they spoke with him at the door of the house, 20. And said, Pray sir, we came down the first time to buy *corn for* food: 21. And it happened, when we came to the halting-place, that we opened our bags, and, behold, *every* man's money *was* in the mouth of his bag, our money in its *full* weight: and we have brought it back in our hand. 22. And other money have we brought down in our hand to buy *corn for* food: we do not know who put our money in our bags. 23. And he said, Peace *be* to you, fear not: your God, and the God of your father hath given you the treasure in your bags: I have received your money. And he brought Simeon out to them. 24. And the man brought the men into Joseph's house, and gave *them* water, and they washed their feet; and he gave provender to their asses. 25. And they made ready the present before Joseph came at noon: for they

The stem is not thick; and attains a height of twelve to twenty, seldom thirty, feet. The branches are numerous and much divided. The blossoms, which are fully developed in April, are whitish, and stand together on the extreme boughs in grape-like clusters. The shell of the nut is odoriferous and of a flesh-colour. The kernel resembles that of the almond, is oily, and green with a red covering.

The last fruit mentioned is *almonds*. It is scarcely necessary to describe the almond-tree (Amygdalus communis) with its profuse snow-white flowers, so beautifully compared with the hoary head of the aged man (Eccl. xii. 5). It grows in Syria and Palestine, spreads to Affghanistan, but does not seem to have been indigenous in Egypt.

The question, indeed, offers itself, how Jacob was able to procure all these valuable productions in a year of dearth and famine; and it has been asserted that their introduction renders the scarcity in Canaan historically questionable. But it may be observed, that almost all of them require for their growth heat rather than moisture, and that some develop themselves even to greatest advantage in dry years and in a dry soil. Besides, as they are all articles of luxury, stores might have been preserved from preceding years.

15—31. The brothers arrived in Egypt without an accident, and appeared before Joseph. They were conducted into his house, where his steward at once astonished and calmed them by mentioning "their God and the God of their father," and restored to them their brother Simeon. They familiarised themselves with the strange thought of being objects of hospitality under the inhospitable roof of an

heard that they should there eat a meal. 26. And when Joseph came home, they brought him the present which *was* in their hand into the house, and prostrated themselves before him to the ground. 27. And he asked them of *their* welfare, and said, Is your father well, the old man of whom you spoke? *Is* he still alive? 28. And they said, Thy servant our father *is* well, he *is* still alive. And they bowed and prostrated themselves. 29. And he lifted up his eyes, and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, *Is* this your youngest brother, of whom you spoke to me? And he said, God be gracious to thee, my son. 30. And Joseph hastened; for his love was warmed for his brother: and he sought *where* to weep; and he entered into *his* chamber, and wept there. 31. And he washed his face, and went out, and restrained himself, and said, Set on the meal. 32. And they set on for him by himself, and for them by themselves, and for the

Egyptian dignitary; and soon the easy affability with which they were addressed by the grand-vizier completely banished their anxieties. But when Joseph saw Benjamin, the sudden vehemence of his feelings threatened at once to destroy the plans which he had prudently devised for the correction of his brothers; and he hastened into another apartment to seek relief by tears.

32—34. It is known that while many eastern nations, like the later Greeks and Romans, during their meals, *reclined* on their couches (xviii. 4), the Egyptians are generally represented as *sitting* (ver. 33), although they had couches of the most varied designs and the most elegant shapes.—The antipathy harboured by the Egyptians against strangers was proverbial; they would on no account consent to eat with them at the same table; and Herodotus remarks, in this respect, that no Egyptian man or woman will use the knife, spit, or caldron of a Greek, or taste of the flesh of a pure ox that has been divided by a Grecian knife; because, as that author observes, the Egyptians show the greatest reverence to cows which are sacred to Isis, whereas the Greeks will kill them; this was one of the reasons why all foreign shepherds were a horror to the Egyptians (xlvi. 34); and Moses advanced, as a pretext for his request, "we shall sacrifice before the Egyptians animals which it is in their eyes an abominable crime to kill; and they will stone us." But this was certainly not the motive for Joseph's separation from his brothers. For the meal was prepared in his own house and by his own servants; the dishes were all placed upon his table, from which he sent portions to the brothers; it is, therefore, impossible to suppose that animals held sacred in the district of Joseph's residence had been killed for this feast. Animal food formed, indeed, a part of this entertainment (ver. 16); but it is an assertion which at present scarcely deserves a refutation, that the Egyptians entirely abstained from the use of meat; for though there was scarcely an animal which was not held sacred in some province, there was, perhaps with the only exception of the cow, none which was not killed and eaten in other parts of the land (see on Exod. p. 108). The reason of the

Egyptians who were eating with him, by themselves: for the Egyptians cannot eat a meal with the Hebrews; for that *is* an abomination to the Egyptians. 33. And they sat before him, the firstborn according to his primogeniture, and the youngest according to his youth: and the men marvelled one at another. 34. And he sent portions to them from himself: but Benjamin's portion was five times as much as any of the portions of all *the rest.* And they drank, and were merry with him.

separation lies in the spirit of exclusiveness reigning in the Egyptian castes. Joseph not only sat removed from his brothers, but even from the Egyptians who formed his household. Though he was in every regard an Egyptian, and his suite probably included persons of high station, they doubtless did not belong to the caste of priests into which Joseph, by his marriage, seems to have been received. So there were three, and perhaps more, different tables in the same apartment; and the Hindoos, in this respect very much resembling the Egyptians, are so anxiously careful in their separation, that the members of one caste abhor to touch the utensils out of which the individuals of another caste have eaten.—Joseph, wishing to appear, in the eyes of the brothers, as possessed of extraordinary and almost supernatural gifts, to their utmost astonishment, placed them in the exact order of their birth; but though by this circumstance he might for a moment have disturbed their ease, he soon restored it by his heart-winning cordiality. He sent to Benjamin portions five times larger than those served to the rest, which distinction was too obvious to be mistaken or overlooked by the brothers; for larger shares at meals were among the Hebrews and other ancient nations a usual mode of showing preference and marked honour. Joseph wished, indeed, to keep his brothers in constant attention, and vividly to impress upon them that they were connected with him by a tie at once powerful and enigmatical.

CHAPTER XLIV.

1. And he commanded the steward of his house, saying, Fill the men's bags *with* food, as much as they can carry, and put every man's money in his bag's mouth. 2. And put my cup, the silver cup, into the mouth of the bag of the youngest, and the money of his purchase *of corn.* And he did in accordance with the word that

1—5. It seems almost an unnatural callousness on the part of Joseph that he did not make himself known to his brothers at the repast in his house. He evidently felt uncommon delight in the scene; he revelled in wonderful recollections and brilliant anticipations; his sagacious mind at once perceived the transparent tissue which connected his dreams with their marvellous realisation; the wine had opened his lips; yet his heart remained closed and steeled; and he coldly dismissed his brothers as if they were total strangers. However, a scene of recognition at the festive board would have materially weakened the effect of his well-devised scheme,

Joseph had spoken. 3. When morning was light, the men were sent away, they and their asses. 4. When they had left the city, *and* had not *yet* gone far, Joseph said to his steward, Rise, pursue after the men; and when thou overtakest them, say to them, Wherefore have you returned evil for good? 5. *Is* not this *it* of which my lord drinketh, and whereby he surely divineth? You have done evil in what you did.—6. And he overtook them, and he spoke to them those words. 7. And they said to him, Wherefore doth my lord say these words? God forbid that thy servants should do a thing like that: 8. Behold, the money which we found in the mouths of our bags, we returned to thee out of the land of Canaan: how then should we steal out of the house of thy lord silver or gold? 9. With whomsoever of thy servants it be found, let him die, and we also will be bondmen to thy lord. 10. And he said, *Is* it now indeed right according to your words? he with whom it is found shall be my servant; but you shall be blameless. 11. And they hastened and

and it would have destroyed the character of his mission, which made him the medium of retribution for his brothers. At the meal Joseph was, in a certain respect, not their superior but their equal, "they drank, and they were merry with him"; still more, they were his guests, and therefore objects of sacred attention; he would, under such circumstances, not have been able to act with rigid justice; the solemn plan of correction, so grandly commenced, would have ended in a trifling compromise; and from the sphere of Divine thought it would have sunk into the ordinary circle of human weakness. Therefore, Joseph gathered once more all his energy; adopted measures by which the character of supernatural interference would become most striking; and assumed more than ever the appearance of a superhuman sage. The ancient Egyptians, and still more, the Persians, practised a mode of divination from goblets. Small pieces of gold or silver, together with precious stones, marked with strange figures and signs, were thrown into the vessel; after which, certain incantations were pronounced, and the evil demon was invoked; the latter was then supposed to give the answer, either by intelligible words, or by pointing to some of the characters on the precious stones, or in some other more mysterious manner. Sometimes the goblet was filled with pure water, upon which the sun was allowed to play; and the figures which were thus formed, or which a lively imagination fancied it saw, were interpreted as the desired omen: a method of taking auguries still employed in Egypt and Nubia. The goblets were usually of a spherical form; and from this reason, as well as because they were believed to teach man all natural and many supernatural things, they were called "celestial globes." Most celebrated was the magnificent vase of turquoise of the wise Jemsheed, the Solomon among the ancient Persian kings, the founder of Persepolis; and Alexander the Great, so eager to imitate eastern manners, is said to have adopted the sacred goblets also.

6—12. But Joseph, though deprived of

took down every man his sack to the ground, and opened every man his sack. 12. And he searched, *and* began with the eldest, and finished with the youngest: and the cup was found in Benjamin's bag.—13. And they rent their clothes, and loaded every man his ass, and returned to the city. 14. And Judah and his brothers came to Joseph's house; and he *was* still there: and they fell before him on the ground. 15. And Joseph said to them, What deed *is* this that you have done? Do you not know that such a man as I can certainly divine? 16. And Judah said, What shall we say to my lord? what shall we speak? or how shall we justify ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants: behold, we *are* my lord's servants, both we, and *he* in whose hand the cup hath been found. 17. And he said, God forbid that I should do so: the man in whose hand the cup hath been found, he shall be my servant: but you go up in peace to your father.

18. Then Judah stepped near to him, and said, Oh my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my

his cup, was yet able to divine, and to fix upon the brothers as the offenders. The latter, not believing in superstitious auguries, could value the goblet only in so far as it was of precious metal; without, therefore, adverting to the chief charge of the steward, they simply protested, that as they had honestly returned the money found in their sacks, it was most improbable that they should steal silver or gold; and so certain were they of each other's innocence, that they unanimously declared, that he who had committed the theft should suffer death, while all the rest should be slaves to the vice-roy. But the steward, with an affected air of equity, reproved their impetuosity and exaggeration, observing that, in common justice, the thief alone should be forced to serve as slave, while the others would be regarded as innocent: for his sole object was to *separate* Benjamin from his brothers.

13—17. Their unspeakable grief when the cup was found assumed the violence of mourning; and far from agreeing to the proposal of the steward, they, without delay, returned to the royal city. As Judah had become a surety for Benjamin, he this time headed the caravan. Joseph, receiving his brothers with a speech of cruel and haughty irony, branded their desire of deceiving his divine infallibility, as a work of folly and infatuation. Now the relation between Joseph and his brothers had reached the highest point of preternatural mystery; the one appeared to have discovered what lies absolutely beyond the reach of human knowledge and ability; and the others were overpowered by feelings of humble submission. They attempted no reply or excuse; Benjamin did not remonstrate against the disgraceful imputation; and Judah, without denying his brother's guilt, simply referred the strange concatenation of events to the inscrutable will and interference of God, who had found out their iniquity.

18—34. But when Joseph firmly insisted upon detaining Benjamin alone, while the others should at once return to their father "in peace," Judah, tormented as he was by the most bitter pangs and

lord's ears, and let not thy anger burn against thy servant: for thou *art* as Pharaoh. 19. My lord asked his servants, saying, Have you a father, or a brother? 20. And we said to my lord, We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a young one; and his brother *is* dead; and he alone is left of his mother, and his father loveth him. 21. And thou saidst to thy servants, Bring him down to me, that I may set my eyes upon him. 22. And we said to my lord, The youth cannot leave his father: for *if* he should leave his father, *his father* would die. 23. And thou saidst to thy servants, Unless your youngest brother come down with you, you shall see my face no more. 24. And when we came up to thy servant my father, we told him the words of my lord. 25. And our father said, Go again, *and* buy us a little *corn for* food. 26. And we said, We cannot go down: if our youngest brother be with us, then will we go down: for we may not see the man's face, if our youngest brother *be* not with us. 27. And thy servant my father said to us, You know that my wife bore me two *sons*. 28. And the one went out from me, and I said, Surely he is torn in pieces; and I saw him not since: 29. And if you take this one also from me, and an accident befall him, you will bring

sorrows, could no longer restrain his revolted sentiments; all the floods of his agitated mind rushed upon him like a mighty torrent; the nobleness of his nature stood aghast at the inhuman barbarity of the tyrant; but Judah, the lion, could never degrade his dignity by an outburst of impotent rage; the tempest of his feelings was checked by controlling reason; and the chaotic confusion of his emotions gave way to manly composure and lucid thought. Stepping forward towards the inexorable man, with the courage and modesty of the hero, he delivered that address which is one of the masterpieces of Hebrew composition. It is not distinguished by brilliant imagination or highly poetical diction; its inimitable charm and excellence consist in the power of psychological truth, easy simplicity, and affecting pathos. It possesses the eloquence of facts, not of words; it is, in reality, scarcely more than a simple recapitulation of past incidents; but the selection, arrangement, and intrinsic emphasis of the facts produce an effect attainable only by consummate art. The deep and fervent love of the aged father for his youngest son, forms the centre, round which the other parts of the speech, the allusion to Joseph, to Rachel, and to the struggle of the brothers before their departure from Canaan, are skilfully grouped. Jacob would never survive the loss of Benjamin; and if the brothers returned without him, they would see their father expire in agony before their eyes. Was this not enough for the feelings of a son? Could Joseph still remain unmoved? One trait more com-

down my grey hairs with sorrow into the grave. 30. Now therefore when I come to thy servant my father, and the youth *be* not with us, since his soul is bound up in the youth's soul; 31. It will happen, when he seeth that the youth *is* not *with us*, that he will die: and thy servants will bring down the grey hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow into the grave. 32. For thy servant became surety for the youth to my father, saying, If I do not bring him to thee, then I will have sinned to my father for ever. 33. Now, therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant remain instead of the youth as a bondman to my lord; and let the youth go up with his brothers. 34. For how shall I go up to my father, and the youth *is* not with me? lest perhaps I see the evil that will befall my father.

pleted the victory over his heart. Judah had not words only for his unhappy father; but anxious to seal his filial love by the greatest sacrifice he could possibly offer: he was ready to renounce his home, his wife and his children, and for ever to toil in the drudgery of Egyptian bondage. However, Judah's moderation was not the effect of mere helplessness. Almost certain that he would not be refused as a substitute for his brother Benjamin, and satisfied if this request only were granted to him, he was unwilling to force Joseph's decision; he abstained even from touching upon the chief and most essential question of Benjamin's guilt or innocence; the fact alone that the goblet had been found in the possession of the latter was to him a certain proof that the whole embarrassment was so decreed and designed by the Lord: though he tried to interest the *humanity of Joseph*, he did not wish to interfere with the *councils of God*;—the grand doctrine of Divine Providence breathes through and animates every part of this narrative, as profound as it is beautiful.

CHAPTER XLV.

1. Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all those who stood by him; and he cried, Let every man go out from me. And there stood no man with him, when

1.—The thrilling tale, having fully realised all the ends for which it was conceived, and having "vindicated the ways of God to man," hastens to its conclusion. Joseph was rejoiced that he at last was permitted to resign the stern office of judge, to descend from the giddy and frigid height of superior to be an equal of his brothers, and to remove at once the worldly and the moral barriers which had so long separated him from his own beloved family. But though almost overwhelmed by the turbulence of his sentiments, his mind was still powerful enough to command and to govern them. Should the Egyptian officials witness the recognition? Should they hear or infer the crime of his brothers, and recoil at their ruthless barbarity? They would have perceived the guilt, but would have been unable to estimate the

Joseph made himself known to his brothers. 2. And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard *it*. 3. And Joseph said to his brothers, I *am* Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brothers could not answer him; for they were confounded before him. 4. And Joseph said to his brothers, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I *am* Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. 5. And now be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that you sold me hither: for God sent me before you for the preservation of life. 6. For these two years *hath* the famine *been* in the land: and *there are* yet five years, in which *there will* neither *be* ploughing nor harvest. 7. And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. 8. So now *it was* not you *that* sent me hither, but God: and He hath made me governor to Pharaoh, and lord of

atonement; they would have shuddered at the deed, but have failed to understand it as a means in the hand of Providence; their aversion against the foreigners and the nomads would have deepened into detestation; and their presence would have destroyed all the beautiful prospects which then filled Joseph's agitated mind. Absorbed by such thoughts, and, moreover, reluctant to profane so sacred a scene by the curious gaze of strangers, he ordered all Egyptians to leave him.

2—15. After having silenced the first tumult of his emotions, he at once mentioned his name, and abruptly enquired after Jacob.—The haste with which he turned to the absent father, almost forgetting his present brothers, was but too natural: well aware that, as the instrument of Divine correction, he had tortured the heart of his aged parent by insisting upon Benjamin's journey; he felt a profound delight to be, at length, released from an ungrateful duty, and an anomalous position. But the brothers had been astounded and terrified rather than surprised by his announcement; and they trembled with undiminished awe before the impenetrable man who had more than once shown them his severity and his favour. Joseph, therefore, desirous to gain their confidence, rose to the highest ideas which he was conscious of representing: repeating, without disguise or adornment, the ignominious fact that he was the brother they had so criminally sold, he entreated them henceforth to banish all pain and grief at that deed, since God had turned it into a means of deliverance, both for them and the heathen nations; they might, therefore, be consoled by the reflection, that it was God who had sent him into the strange land for great and beneficent ends, not to remain a slave, but to become the first adviser of the monarch. He recurs to this idea so emphatically, and so evidently for the encouragement of his brothers, as if he intended to assure them that their crime was atoned for by the sincerity of their repentance, and to cheer them with the beautiful doctrine: "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered: blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity" (Ps. xxxii. 1, 2).—But then his thoughts impatiently returned to his dis-

all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt. 9. Hasten, and go up to my father, and say to him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down to me, tarry not: 10. And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast: 11. And there will I nourish thee; for *there are* yet five years of famine; lest thou, and thy house*hold*, and all that thou hast, come to poverty. 12. And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that *it is* my mouth that speaketh to you. 13. And you shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that you have seen; and you shall hasten and bring down my father hither. 14. And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck. 15. And he kissed all his brothers, and wept upon

tant father; he wished him to live in his immediate neighbourhood, and considered it a precious privilege to protect and effectually to support him. So deep was his veneration for the man whose eventful destinies appeared to his clear-sighted intellect like the bold characters of Divine retribution.

The residence chosen by Joseph for his family was at *Goshen*. This district of Lower Egypt belonged to the most fertile parts of the land, was eminently favourable to the purposes of agriculture, but especially distinguished by rich pastures, and hence highly desirable for breeders of cattle. It was situated in the east of the Nile, since the Israelites at their departure from Egypt reached Succoth without crossing that river, from which, however, it could not have been distant, since, in the desert, they bitterly regretted the want of fishes, which they had eaten in Egypt "freely"; nor was it far from the residence of the Pharaohs, from where it could be easily reached by carriage; in the east, or rather *north*-east of it, since Joseph *went up* to meet his father at his arrival from Canaan; whether that residence was at Tanis, or Memphis, or Heliopolis. It was also called *Rameses*, and included the towns Pithom and Raamses. It extended, no doubt, from the vicinity of the Nile considerably to the east, perhaps to the borders of the waste tracts; but not to the desert itself, to which the Hebrews, in Moses' time, asked permission to proceed for the performance of sacrifices. More than this, it is impossible to ascertain, either from Biblical notices or other sources; as, in fact, the name Goshen is not mentioned by any independent profane writer. Nor is it of any value, to fix at random upon any one district in the east of the Nile, and to represent it by a specious and partial description as the Goshen of Genesis. The "Hill or Tower of the Jews" (Tell or Turbet el Jehud), north-east of Cairo, on the Pelusiac arm of the Nile, dates unquestionably from a much later period, probably after the time of Ptolemæus Philometer, when Jews again settled in that district. — It needs scarcely to be remarked that the province of Goshen was not exclusively appropriated to the small colony of Hebrews settling there under Joseph's autho-

them: and after that his brothers spoke to him.—16. And the report was heard in Pharaoh's house, saying, Joseph's brothers are come: and it pleased Pharaoh and his servants. 17. And Pharaoh said to Joseph, Say to thy brothers, This do, load your animals, and go, come to the land of Canaan; 18. And take your father and your house*holds*, and come to me: and I will give you the best *part* of the land of Egypt, and you shall eat the fat of the land. 19. Now thou art commanded, this do; take you carriages out of the land of Egypt for your little ones and for your wives, and bring your father, and come. 20. And do not regard your utensils; for the good of all the land

rity; since, even in the time of the Exodus, after their prodigious increase, it was inhabited by Egyptians also; for both are introduced as *neighbours*, giving and receiving presents, and as living promiscuously in the same cities, so that the houses of the Hebrews were to be marked for the guidance of the destroying angel (Exod. xii. 23).

16—21. Although Joseph was inferior to Pharaoh only with regard to the throne, and although he was the governor, master, and ruler over all Egypt; he used his power with a moderation equally honourable to his intelligence and his character. He was, indeed, certain that arrangements made by him in favour of his family would not be opposed or reversed by the king; and he therefore, without previous consultation or permission, accorded to his brothers abodes in Goshen, in the choicest part of the land (ver. 10); but he afterwards most judiciously endeavoured to obtain the royal approbation. Having himself informed the king of the arrival of his relatives, of their pursuits, and their possession of numerous cattle; he took five of the brothers with him to present them to Pharaoh, and instructed them what to say at that interview (xlvi. 31—xlvii. 4). The king had before, of his own accord, promised that Joseph's family should live in a *good* part of the land, without, however, making mention of Goshen (vers. 18, 20). The request of the brothers implied, in fact, a certain boldness, because in Goshen the cattle of the king himself was kept (xlvii. 6); and it appears that Pharaoh gave his consent only after some consideration; for he addressed the answer not to the brothers directly, but to Joseph, and with a certain formality (see on xlvii. 5, 6). How prudent, and perhaps necessary, the moderation of Joseph was, is evident, not only from the decided tone of Pharaoh in giving him the strictest commands with the superiority of a master (vers. 17—21), but from the independent position which even the other officials seem to have occupied at the royal court (ver. 16; comp. l. 4—6; xli. 37, 38). Thus disarming suspicion and jealousy, he could, without impediment, employ his genius and his energy in carrying out his great plans for the organisation of the land: for not his own greatness, but the mitigation of a fearful calamity was his aim; and far from coveting dominion, he never ceased to regard himself as an humble medium in the hands of Providence (ver. 5; l. 19 20).

The order of Pharaoh to send carriages to Jacob from Egypt, is either based on the supposition that at that time vehicles for riding were not yet at all known or employed in Canaan; or leads to the inference, that they were essentially different from those used in Egypt; or what is more probable, that those sent by Joseph

of Egypt *is* yours. 21. And the children of Israel did so: and Joseph gave them carriages, according to the command of Pharaoh, and gave them provision for the way. 22. To all of them he gave each man changes of raiment: but to Benjamin he gave three hundred *shekels* of silver, and five changes of raiment. 23. And to his father he sent after this *manner;* ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt, and ten she-asses laden with corn and bread and meat for his father on the way. 24. So he sent his brothers away, and they departed: and he said to them, Do not be afraid on the way.—25. And they went up out of Egypt, and came into the land of Canaan to

were considered to have been so remarkable for elegance and costliness that they mainly contributed to make Jacob believe the royal elevation of his son (ver. 27). But battle-chariots were in Canaan, as in other eastern countries, extensively employed from early times. About the different kinds of Egyptian carriages we refer to Comm. on Exod. p. 181.

22—24. To seal the reconciliation with his brothers, Joseph dismissed them with such presents as are not unusually given in the east to testify love or respect. As in warm countries a frequent change of dress is more a matter of comfort than of luxury, suits of clothes, varying in value and richness, in accordance with the ability of the donor and his regard for the recipient, are an acceptable gift offered to welcome guests, or to friends after a longer separation, and even to kings as a mark of homage. If Joseph, on this as on a former occasion, in signally distinguishing Benjamin by more liberal presents, appears almost guilty of the same weakness which he had reformed in Jacob, it will be remembered, that nature herself justified him in bestowing a larger share of affection on his only full brother. —Anxious to show the fervent love he bore to his father, instead of offering him presents on his arrival in Egypt, he sent him, *besides the necessary provisions*, ten camels, laden with every kind of wealth, unconcerned at the additional burden thus imposed upon him during a journey sufficiently encumbered in itself.— The brothers, still astonished and overwhelmed, were about to return to Canaan with feelings singularly conflicting. They had indeed to convey to their mourning father a most joyous and happy message: but in doing this, they were obliged at once *to confess to him the detestable crime committed by them against Joseph.* How could they face his look of mingled reproach and horror? They might well tremble in depicting to themselves the terrible moment. Joseph, therefore, shrewdly reading their sentiments, exclaimed, when they were departing, "Do not be afraid on the way": but he added no other word of encouragement. By maliciously sacrificing him to their jealousy, they had sinned against their father also; they were to atone for it by a scene of the deepest shame and confusion; and Joseph, who in more than one respect, represents the working of Providence, could not wish to check its justice.

25—28. How, indeed, should Jacob credit his sons, when they told him of Joseph's life and greatness, as this very account made it manifest, that during more than twenty years they had hypocritically feigned to believe in their brother's death, and to be ignorant of its cause? But when, together with their guilt, he saw their earnest repentance; when he heard the lofty view taken by

Jacob their father. 26. And they told him, saying, Joseph *is* yet alive, and indeed he *is* governor over all the land of Egypt. And Jacob's heart remained cold, for he did not believe them. 27. And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said to them: and when he saw the carriages which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived: 28. And Israel said, *It is* enough, Joseph my son *is* yet alive: I will go and see him before I die.

Joseph of his abduction to Egypt, and the cordial pardon granted by him to his brothers (ver. 5); and when he beheld the beautiful presents and carriages which they had brought from Egypt: his heart, so long dead to joy and almost to hope, once more shook off the habitual torpor into which it had fallen; life recovered its charm; he seemed born to new vigour: but his mind, purified and freed, at length, from worldly vanity and weakness, seemed entirely indifferent to the splendour of the Egyptian grand-vizier, and agitated only by the fond sentiments of the father, he exclaimed: "It is enough that my son Joseph is still alive"! It cannot escape the attention of the reader, that henceforth the patriarch is represented not only as fully prepared for death, but as rapidly approaching towards it; thus even on hearing of Joseph's preservation, he added, "let me go and see him before I die" (comp. xlvi. 30; xlvii. 9; xlviii. 1, 10); whereas hitherto he had appeared to dread the thought of the grave (xxxvii. 35; xlii. 38). He had completed the third period of his life, atonement by suffering (see p. 388); he felt reconciled with God and the deeds of his youth and manhood; he had borne the yoke of chastisement; and though he was justified in expecting a last stage of undisturbed blessing, he willingly renounced it, having long since acknowledged the undeserved abundance of Divine mercy towards him (xxxii. 11); and being now satisfied with the peace of his mind, and with the noble privileges of Abraham's faith (xlvi. 1).

CHAPTER XLVI.

1. And Israel journeyed with all he had, and came to Beer-sheba, and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. 2. And God spoke to Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob! Jacob! And he said, Here *am* I.

1—7. When Jacob, on his way from Hebron (xxxvii. 14) towards Egypt, passed Beer-sheba, destined to form the southern frontier-town of the future land of the Hebrews (see p. 286), he imitated the example of his father and his grandfather who had there built altars and invoked God in prayer (xxi. 33; xxvi. 24, 25). But his position was at that time much more calculated to rouse religious sentiments than either that of Abraham or Isaac had been when they worshipped at the same place. Though on the point of meeting a beloved son, he might naturally

3. And He said, I *am* the Omnipotent, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation: 4. I will go down with thee into Egypt, and I will also surely bring thee up *again*: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thy eyes.—5. And Jacob rose from Beer-sheba: and the sons of Israel brought Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their wives, in the carriages which Pharaoh had sent to carry him. 6. And they took their cattle, and their property which they had acquired in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob, and all his seed with him: 7. His sons, and his sons' sons with him, his daughters, and his sons' daughters, and all his seed, he brought with him into Egypt.

8. And these *are* the names of the children of Israel,

feel that his immigration into Egypt with his whole family was the first step towards the realisation of the stern prophecy given to Abraham regarding the sojourn of his descendants in a strange land during four centuries, and their merciless oppression by a heartless nation (xv. 13). He knew that this prediction applied to no land more appropriately than to Egypt, famous for its irrational hatred against strangers; that Abraham had been promised to die peacefully in Canaan (xv. 15); and that Isaac had been forbidden to enter Egypt, because the time of fulfilment had not yet arrived (xxvi. 2; see p. 327). He, therefore, having reached the last town on the sacred soil, paused once more, and poured out before God his joy, his gratitude, and his fear. He felt certainly relieved, when he surveyed the circumstances under which he approached the land of the Pharaohs; his chief guarantee was not the almost unlimited, but transitory, power of his son, nor the deep, but fluctuating, obligation of the people towards him as their rescuer, but the express permission of the king in terms of official authority (xlv. 18—20). But how, if the political condition of Egypt, by some unforeseen event, as, for instance, by a change of dynasty, should be so fundamentally altered as to cause either oblivion or disregard of the old conventions and pledges? (Exod. i. 8). Would the sympathy of the people be sufficient to shield a helpless colony, the invited guests of a benevolent king, against the cruelty of tyrannical successors? Therefore God appeared to Jacob, calmed his anxieties, and exhorted him fearlessly to enter Egypt, where—whatever their prosperity or general well-being — a numerous people would spring from his sons; and whence, in accordance with former promises, they would in due time be gloriously led out to conquer the land of Canaan (xv. 16). But Jacob himself would certainly not see the beginning of oppression; he would end his days in happiness in the arms of his favourite son; and though dying in the strange country, he would be buried in the land of promise (comp. xv. 15).—It was considered a happy privilege to know that the eyes would, in the moment of death, be closed by some loving hand, especially a devoted child; not less than to be buried by affectionate sons, and in the land, if not the grave, of ancestors or relatives (xxv. 9; xxxv. 29; xlix. 29—32; l. 25).

8—27. The list of Jacob's family, here appropriately inserted, offers various and

who came into Egypt, Jacob and his sons: Reuben, Jacob's firstborn.—9. And the sons of Reuben; Hanoch, and Phallu, and Hezron, and Carmi.—10. And the sons of Simeon; Jemuel, and Jamin, and Ohad, and Jachin, and Zohar, and Saul the son of a Canaanitish woman.—11. And the sons of Levi; Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.—12. And the sons of Judah; Er, and Onan, and Shelah, and Perez, and Zerah: but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan. And the sons of Perez were Hezron and Hamul.—13. And the sons of Issachar; Tola, and Phuvah, and Job, and Shimron.—14. And the sons of Zebulun; Sered, and Elon, and Jahleel.—15. These *are* the sons of Leah, whom she bore to Jacob in Padan-aram, with his

grave difficulties; but they are of a nature to open a welcome insight into the peculiarities of the historical style of the Bible.

The text distinctly observes, "All the souls of the house of Jacob that came into Egypt were seventy" (ver. 27). The same statement is as clearly repeated in other passages (Exod. i. 5; Deut. x. 22). It is, therefore, scarcely possible to doubt that this was a historical tradition generally received among the Israelites. However, the tenour of the present list certainly leads to the inference, that the total number of Hebrew settlers in Egypt was considerably larger than seventy. For 1. Jacob had daughters (ver. 7); and yet Dinah alone, known from a former occurrence, is mentioned in this place (ver. 15). 2. His sons came *with their wives* (ver. 26), none of whom is here counted. 3. They had likewise daughters (ver. 7); but Serah only, the daughter of Asher, is introduced.

Further, are these names fictitious and chosen at random? or which was the author's source or guide? The reply to these questions will lead us to a solution of the difficulty just pointed out.

Our text evidently embodies the chief families which subsequently became important or powerful in each tribe; as in almost all preceding genealogies, the names are, on the whole, not those of individuals, but represent divisions or clans; and if the introduction of Dinah is explicable from the preceding narrative (xxxiv.), Serah may later have become noted in the organization of the tribe of Asher (comp. Num. xxxvi. 1—5).

This view is confirmed by a comparison with the similar list inserted in the history of the wanderings of the people in the desert, when the census was actually taken (Numb. xxvi. 5—60). The persons here mentioned appear there as the founders or heads of families; and the house of Jacob corresponds with the people of Israel. Yet both lists offer a considerable number of differences which but partially admit of a conciliation. 1. In one case a letter is changed, in another transposed, and in others omitted or added, while in one instance a syllable is left out. (We refer to the larger edition of this work). These variations are possibly attributable to the inattention of copyists; and, therefore, do not necessarily demand the supposition of two different traditions; though even the former alternative would naturally derogate from the critical accuracy of the Hebrew text. 2. Some names here introduced are omitted in Numbers; while some new ones, not found in our list, are mentioned in the later portion. This circumstance may certainly be explained by the conjecture that these families, existing in the time of Jacob, had become extinct in the time of Moses; whereas

daughter Dinah: all the souls of his sons and his daughters *were* thirty-three.

16. And the sons of Gad; Ziphion, and Haggi, Shuni, and Ezbon, Eri, and Arodi, and Areli.—17. And the sons of Asher; Jimnah, and Jishvah, and Jishvi, and Beriah, and Serah, their sister: and the sons of Beriah; Heber, and Malchiel.—18. These *are* the sons of Zilpah whom Laban gave to Leah his daughter, and these she bore to Jacob, sixteen souls.

19. The sons of Rachel Jacob's wife *were* Joseph and Benjamin. 20. And to Joseph were born in the land of Egypt Manasseh and Ephraim, whom Asenath the daughter of Poti-pherah priest of On bore to him.—21. And the

others may have been formed since the earlier period. 3. But some names are entirely altered. It is true, that many persons had more than one name, and that therefore the individuals might here be mentioned by one, and the families in Numbers by another; that in one instance the two names are synonymous, and that in another the one corresponds with the other in a kindred dialect; and that, referring to the preceding head (No. 3), one family might have disappeared and another arisen in its stead. But it is evident that all these arguments are artificial expedients scarcely amounting to more than a feeble appearance of probability; and that the impression of the unbiassed reader is that those differences of the names imply likewise inaccuracies of the tradition. 4. This opinion gains still greater force by the fact, that in some instances the relative connection of the families is altered in the two lists: the descendants of Benjamin especially are so essentially different in both cases that no means of conciliation can possibly be effectual. Not only are two names added in our list, and there others appear in a more or less modified form: but one, *Becher*, here mentioned among the Benjamites (ver. 21), is in Numbers (xxvi. 35) counted among the Ephraimites; while two others (Naaman and Ard) here stated as *sons* of Benjamin, are there introduced as his *grand-sons* (by Bela, ver. 40). It may here be again observed, with a certain specious plausibility, that the two families just alluded to (Naaman and Ard), independent at the time of the immigration into Egypt, had in the time of the exodus fallen under the authority of the fraternal family of Bela; and that Becher the Benjamite had become extinct, while a family of the same name, but totally unconnected with it, had sprung up in the tribe of Ephraim: but those who would be satisfied with such a light tissue of superficial likelihood, would be opposed by another difficulty which remains to be considered. A third list of Jacob's descendants occurs in the first Book of Chronicles (chapters ii.—viii.), and it contains deviations not only from our list, but also from that of Numbers. The most numerous and decided differences are again found in the tribe of Benjamin; they there almost amount to a perfect confusion; a double genealogy is given (vii. 6—13 and viii. 1—40), having but very few points of resemblance with the lists under discussion; new names are added, old ones are omitted, altered, or placed in another relationship with the founder of the tribe. It may, indeed, be urged that all these modifications represent as many internal changes of the Benjamites, quite natural in the youngest, and therefore

sons of Benjamin *were* Belah, and Becher, and Ashbel, Gera, and Naaman, Ehi, and Rosh, Muppim, and Huppim, and Ard. 22. These *are* the sons of Rachel, who were born to Jacob: all the souls *were* fourteen.

23. And the sons of Dan; Hushim. 24. And the sons of Naphtali; Jahzeel, and Guni, and Jezer, and Shillem. 25. These *are* the sons of Bilhah, whom Laban gave to Rachel his daughter, and she bore these to Jacob: all the souls *were* seven.

26. All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, that came out of his loins, besides the wives of Jacob's sons,

most unsettled tribe: but, in admitting this, we are compelled to the conclusion that the genealogical lists of the Bible are *national* and *ethnographic* rather than *personal*, that they are a *form* employed to express the author's views of the consanguinity of the tribes or families, and that they are generally the result of historical research, or, as in the instance under discussion, *the reflex of the actual distribution of the Hebrew families in the author's time.* The lists thus lose materially in their immediate value, since they have no *literal* truth; but they gain as essentially in *historical* importance: they are not domestic records, but comprehensive political documents. This fact, so momentous for the exposition of many portions of the Bible, and confirmed by almost all the lists hitherto explained, is strongly corroborated by the very difficulties just discussed. It is not the place here to examine in detail the table inserted in the Book of Chronicles, as many of its deviations occur in the subordinate branches here not introduced; but it may be observed, that it agrees much more with the list in Numbers than with that of this chapter: and this circumstance adds weight to the conjecture, probable in itself, that the list in Numbers is the more authentic one, because copied from the real division of the people; and that, therefore, in cases of discrepancy, it is of higher authority than that of Genesis, which is derived from the more uncertain sources of tradition.—To sum up our estimate on the character of this genealogy, we remark, that the author, believing the immigration of *seventy* Israelites into Egypt to be a historical fact, made up that number by mentioning, in addition to the individuals introduced in the narrative, the founders of the Hebrew families existing in his time, unconcerned or forgetting that thus, including the wives and daughters alluded to by him, but perhaps no more known by name, the amount became considerably higher than seventy.

The sons are arranged according to their mothers; and as the children of the maids were regarded as those of their mistresses, the descendants of Zilpah follow after those of Leah, and the offspring of Bilhah after those of Rachel.

The text remarks the number of Leah's *progeny*, or "the sons and daughters" to have been thirty-three (ver. 15): considering this distinct statement, it is indeed a surprising peculiarity of the style, that thirty-two only are enumerated, and that as Leah had before died in Canaan (xlix. 31), Jacob himself is included in the former number, no doubt with reference to the introductory sentence, "The following came into Egypt, Jacob and his sons" (ver. 8).

28—34. When the patriarch had arrived in the province of Goshen, named by Joseph as his future abode (xlv. 10), he sent Judah, distinguished by courage not less than by ability, to the royal residence, to announce him to Joseph, and to direct the

all the souls *were* sixty-six. 27. And the sons of Joseph, who were born to him in Egypt, *were* two souls: all the souls of the house of Jacob, that came into Egypt, *were* seventy.

28. And he sent Judah before him to Joseph, to direct him to Goshen; and they came into the land of Goshen. 29. And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel his father, to Goshen, and he appeared before him, and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a long time. 30. And Israel said to Joseph, Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, that thou *art* yet alive. 31.

latter to that part of Goshen where he had halted, awaiting his son's arrival (ver. 28). On the one hand, his cattle prevented him from proceeding farther into the land; and, on the other hand, the filial affection of Joseph demanded that he should go to meet his venerable and much tried father. In the embrace of his son, Jacob found the sum of all earthly joys still left to him (ver. 30); and the sight of his father compensated Joseph for all his past sufferings, which he had not ceased to feel, even in the dazzling splendour of his greatness (xli. 52). He then concerted with his brothers the plan for obtaining Pharaoh's sanction to their residing in Goshen. His principal argument was, that in this province they would be withdrawn from the eyes of the Egyptians, *who held all shepherds in abomination.* The pastors formed in Egypt a considerable portion of the fourth caste, to which besides belonged poulterers, fowlers, fishermen, labourers, servants, and common people. The excellence of the pastures, the salubrity of the air, and the hereditary descent of the same occupation from father to son, so favourable to the accumulation of valuable experience, combined to bring the breeding of cattle at an early period to a very considerable degree of perfection; so that, for instance, the sheep regularly brought forth lambs, and were shorn twice every year. Yet the shepherds were deeply despised. Swineherds, almost shunned in India also, were not admitted in any Egyptian temple, and were allowed to intermarry only among themselves. On the sculptures, pastors invariably appear as "dirty and unshaven; and at Beni Hassan and the tombs near the pyramids of Geezeh they are found caricatured as a deformed and unseemly race." To express their utmost detestation against the two impious kings, Cheops and Chephren, who closed all temples and prohibited all sacrifices, the Egyptians called the pyramids they built not by their own names, but by the name of a shepherd, Philition. The intense contempt entertained against shepherds by a nation worshipping animals is not less curious than the animal worship itself; but it may be accounted for by the fact, that in each district some animals only were held sacred, while others were regarded as impure, as for instance the pig, the slightest contact with which rendered any one unclean, and obliged him to perform an ablution in the river; although, strangely enough, it was in certain seasons sacrificed to the moon and to Bacchus, no doubt as an emblem of prolificness; and on these occasions its flesh was freely eaten. If we hereto add, that the pastors were, by their occupation, accustomed *to kill the sacred animals*, we cannot doubt that the aversion borne against them was of a *religious* character, though it was naturally increased by their dependence, poverty, negligent habits, and consequent physical and mental degradation. It is scarcely plausible to ascribe it to "the previous occupation of Egypt by a pastor

And Joseph said to his brothers, and to his father's house, I will go up, and relate to Pharaoh, and say to him, My brothers and my father's house, that *were* in the land of Canaan, are come to me; 32. And the men *are* shepherds, for they are breeders of cattle; and they have brought their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have. 33. And when Pharaoh shall call you, and say, What *is* your occupation? 34. Then you shall say, Thy servants have been breeders of cattle from our youth until now, both we, and our fathers: in order that you may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd *is* an abomination to the Egyptians.

race, who had committed great cruelties during their possession of the country": this opinion, based as it is on the uncertain event of the invasion of the Hycsos, leaves the fact unexplained why the Egyptians should have so thoroughly despised or "abominated" persons belonging to *their own people*, and forming a most useful, if not indispensable, class of society: though they might possibly, in many districts, have forced a subjugated tribe or people to tend their flocks, like a kind of Helots or Pariahs, and thus the contempt of the shepherds gradually spreading through the whole country might have been extended upon native Egyptians also. Nor can that animosity be attributed to the circumstance that the eastern boundaries of the land were constantly infested and endangered by nomadic shepherds, against whom the Egyptians were always compelled to send armies: such courage and valour would have inspired with respect rather than contempt a nation among which warriors occupied the second rank in society; and similar attacks could scarcely be apprehended from their own countrymen, settled and closely controlled in the interior of the land. Nor is it credible that the love of agriculture should have engendered a hatred against the breeding of cattle, perhaps supposed to be inseparable from savage barbarism: for, on the one hand, the Egyptians were not an exclusively agricultural people; and, on the other hand, the two pursuits referred to have such numerous interests in common, and complete each other in so many respects, that a permanent antagonism between them is unnatural. It appears, indeed, that some portions of the Egyptians entertained more rational and more friendly feelings towards the feeders of their cattle; the inhabitants of the Mendesian district, for instance, honoured the goatherds, because they worshipped Pan in the goats, and observed general and public mourning on the death of a certain he-goat. —However, Jacob's family was superior to the generality of Egyptian pastors in one essential point. While the latter tended and provided for the herds and flocks of the rich, the former were themselves proprietors of large numbers of cattle, which they kept in accordance with their ancestral customs. This circumstance, though insufficient to remove the national prejudice against the occupation of the Hebrews, and therefore rendering their settlement at Goshen or *Rameses*, "the district of shepherds," advisable, necessarily raised their social position in the eyes of the Egyptians, who therefore at a later time did not scruple to enter with them into the most intimate and unreserved intercourse. Yet the temporary isolation of the Hebrews could not but be favourable for their special and peculiar development, and for the preservation of the purity of their faith, though, in the lapse of centuries, they had not moral fortitude enough to withstand the corrupting influence of Egyptian idolatry, by which they were ensnared to a very deplorable extent.

CHAPTER XLVII.

1. Then Joseph came and told Pharaoh, and said, My father, and my brothers, and their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have, are come from the land of Canaan, and, behold, they *are* in the land of Goshen. 2. And from the number of his brothers he took five men, and presented them to Pharaoh. 3. And Pharaoh said to his brothers, What *is* your occupation? And they said to Pharaoh, Thy servants *are* shepherds, both we, and our fathers. 4. They said moreover to Pharaoh, To sojourn in the land are we come; for thy servants have no pasture for their flocks; for the famine *is* heavy in the land of

1—12. In conformity with the plan devised before, Joseph endeavoured to obtain Pharaoh's permission for the settlement of his family in Goshen, a district considered by him both for its position and its natural fertility peculiarly adapted for a colony of breeders of cattle. The five brothers presented by him to the king distinctly named that province, once more repeating that their occupation had been hereditary in their family for generations, since they regarded this circumstance both as congenial to Egyptian feeling, and as a powerful reason for their perfect seclusion in a separate and agricultural district. Pharaoh, in granting this request, addressed his reply, not to the brothers, but, in order to invest it with official dignity, to Joseph, his grand-vizier; though not so authoritative as on a previous occasion, it is certainly not less formal; and in order to manifest his undiminished benevolence towards the strangers, he not only modified his former general permission by specifying Goshen as that "best part" of the country where they were to settle; but he added, as a new favour, his readiness to appoint them his own head-shepherds, functionaries of no little influence in the households of eastern princes, and deemed sufficiently important to be enumerated among the chief public officials: and as if once more, and in the very presence of the brothers, to show the unlimited confidence he placed in Joseph's wisdom and perfect integrity, he committed the decision to his discretion, certain that not even the strongest affection for his family would bias his judgment to the prejudice of the royal interests. It seems that Joseph took every precaution to let his brothers appear as harmless and inoffensive shepherds, not likely at any future period to become dangerous to the safety or tranquillity of the state; they were merely come "to sojourn in the land"; the cause of their change of abode was exclusively the want of pasturage in Canaan, as if they contemplated to return thither after the expiration of the years of famine; and they explicitly stated, "we were herdsmen from our youth to this time, both we and our fathers" (xlvi. 34).—It may be surprising that only after the interview of the brothers was finished, and had been attended with the desired result, Joseph introduced his father separately to Pharaoh (ver. 7). But this circumstance is interestingly significant in more than one respect. The meeting between the king of Egypt and the representatives of the future tribes of Israel, was designed to possess a *public* and *political* character; it was intended to show that the privileges were granted to them in due form; and Joseph's presence has here a similar im-

Canaan: now, therefore, we pray thee, let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen. 5. And Pharaoh spoke to Joseph, saying, Thy father and thy brothers are come to thee: 6. The land of Egypt *is* before thee; in the best of the land make thy father and thy brothers dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell: and if thou knowest *any* men of ability among them, then make them overseers over my cattle. 7. And Joseph brought Jacob his father, and placed him before Pharaoh: and Jacob blessed Pharaoh. 8. And Pharaoh said to Jacob, How many are the years of thy life? 9. And Jacob said to Pharaoh, The years of my pilgrimage *are* a hundred and thirty years:

portance as that of Phichol, the state-councillor, at the conclusion of the treaty between the king of the Philistines and Abraham (see pp. 285, 286). But the interest taken by Pharaoh in Jacob was *purely personal*; and as if to express this in some striking manner, the king, avoiding all allusion to public matters, *inquired after his age* (ver. 8): which question, if indeed trivial, is judiciously chosen, not only to mark the *private* character of the interview, but to elicit an answer full of interest, and affording another reason why Jacob was not before presented to Pharaoh. The patriarch, though far from having reached the age which had hitherto been usual in his family, and irrespective of the rapid decrease of his vital powers, *had, in his mind, concluded his earthly career*: he either dwells with his reminiscences on the tempestuous and gloomy past, or he anticipates with his thoughts the eventful future, either his own death and burial, or the last prophetic blessings to be bestowed on his sons and grandsons; he has renounced the present; he has retired from the stage of active life, and yielded it to his sons, who henceforth occupy the foreground in the progress of events; the real "history" of Jacob ceases with his arrival in Goshen, and that of the next generation begins: though still for a while hovering over the scene, he appears like the herald of remote occurrences, and like a spirit almost impatiently hastening beyond the boundaries of Time to the spheres of Eternity. But though, from these reasons, his presence would have been inappropriate, when the political and social position of the tribes was discussed; he was personally an individual so venerable, and so important by the ideas embodied in his life, that it would have been a serious omission had he not been brought before the king, to express his long and varied experience in a few words equally characterised by melancholy and resignation (ver. 9). It will ever be a matter of surpassing interest to contemplate the aspiring but crafty *Jacob* gradually become the conqueror *Israel*; to pursue the phases by which the spiritual birthright, dishonestly wrested from Esau, was by misfortune, repentance, and atonement, ultimately deserved and permanently maintained; and to consider that when the season of prosperity at length arrived, *Jacob was unable to enjoy it*, because, though at peace with himself and reconciled with God, he felt the oppressive burden of his past miseries, the consequence of early sins. — However, the uncertain wanderings of the Hebrews were now for several successive centuries to give way to a more constant mode of life; Joseph assigned to his brothers and their families "possessions" in the land of Goshen, where their descendants long resided in undisturbed tranquillity, growing in numbers and in wealth; till their

few and evil have the years of my life been, and have not attained to the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage. 10. And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh. 11. And Joseph made his father and his brothers dwell, and gave them a possession, in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded. 12. And Joseph supported his father, and his brothers, and all his father's house*hold*, with bread, according to *their* families.

13. And *there was* no bread on the whole earth; for the famine *was* very heavy; and the land of Egypt and

very increase and happiness, rousing the apprehension of tyrannical kings, caused them to be scattered over all the land of Egypt, and to commence a period of toil and wandering, more protracted and afflicting than that endured by the patriarchs.

13—27. The narrative, now returning to the history of the famine, unfolds a picture of distress and wretchedness, for which we were little prepared by the preceding portions. While expecting to see the people of Egypt encounter the dire period of scarcity with cheerfulness and spontaneous gratitude towards their rescuer; while hoping to behold the beautiful spectacle of a great community conquering the scourges of nature by the wisdom of a thoughtful legislation, and strengthened in their religious feelings by the providential redemption from a fearful calamity: we are met by the cries of agony of a starving population, and find at the end of the seven years, a happy, free, and prosperous nation, converted into a tribe of dependent serfs and paupers, so degraded that they themselves demand servitude as a boon and a privilege (ver. 25). We are, therefore, compelled to ask, what purpose did the penetration and shrewdness of Joseph serve? what advantage did the Egyptian people derive from his predictions? and what greater misfortunes could have befallen them, than those which really happened; since without Joseph's interference they would have themselves possessed sufficient corn from the years of plenty to subsist in the years of famine? In what light have we, therefore, to view his character? Does it not, at first glance, appear despotic, cruel, and heartless, anxious only for the aggrandisement of the royal power, but unfeeling for the miserable condition of the people? Is not his person, hitherto described in so bright and almost sublime traits, at once stained by the execrable meanness of sacrificing the happiness of a nation to subservient sycophancy for a tyrannical dynasty?

Some critics, believing that the Biblical style must not be analysed so rigorously, have conveniently declined entering into these questions at all, and have even taunted the attempt as idle and superfluous speculation. They are satisfied with asserting, that the arrangements made by Joseph are "essentially the same which ultimately take place in every well-regulated empire": but this is far from being correct; for exactly the contrary was the case in the Mosaic constitution, according to which the monarch was as dependent on the Supreme King as the people itself; while every Hebrew citizen could maintain his hereditary landed property even against the caprice and arbitrariness of the monarch; and the priests, richly endowed in Egypt, received alone no inheritance.

the land of Canaan were exhausted by the famine. 14. And Joseph collected all the money that was found in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, for the corn which they bought: and Joseph brought the money into the house of Pharaoh. 15. And when the money was spent in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came to Joseph, saying, Give us bread: for why should we die in thy presence? for the money is

Others find in Joseph's arrangements nothing but the embodiment of the fact, "how, by the prudent application of the magazine system, a large population was protected against hunger, but was obliged to purchase these benefits by submitting to an annual ground-rent, which had not been paid before": however, our narrative relates facts very different from those here stated; it speaks not only of a ground-rent, but of a people totally impoverished; of the loss of all lands; of servitude, and of transplantation: the change was much more important, and the blame which evidently falls upon its stern author, of a much darker dye.

Some, again, strangely enough, suppose that the end of this section is no other but "to show how Israel's family lived quietly and comfortably in the land of Goshen, and vastly increased in numbers," while the Egyptians were deprived of all their property; or "how great the benefits were which Joseph conferred upon his house": but who will find it likely, that in order to intimate, by an obscure inference, the domestic well-being of one family, the author should have minutely described the revolutions of an empire? The narrative has, at least, as much importance for the people of Egypt, as for the house of Jacob; and its tendency is so entirely political, that it nearly appears like an episode entire and complete in itself. Some, therefore, feeling this larger back-ground, added, that "Joseph's conduct was necessary to exhibit the later ingratitude of the Egyptian kings, who, forgetting his merits, oppressed the Hebrews." But does this view clear Joseph from the reproach of cold indifference to the interests of the people? Does it not almost seem, that his own descendants deserved their affliction as a retaliation for the wretched lot which he prepared for the Egyptians?

However, others, seeing the serious defects of Joseph's policy, and anxious to palliate them, urge that "these financial measures were not very oppressive, since a tax of the fifth part was in reality moderate in so fertile a land as Egypt": but the question is not so much about the impost of the tax, as about the total loss of land and all other property; and if the payment of a fifth part of the produce was not burthensome in a period of unusual abundance, it does not follow that it was as easily borne in ordinary years; and, indeed, those scholars are obliged to add: "it is always precarious to judge the acts of an official in the despotic East by the standard of strict and enlightened morality"! forgetting that the character of Joseph, represented with almost ideal purity, in dignity nearly equals that of Abraham, in integrity surpasses that of Jacob, and in pious resignation that of Moses. Some have, therefore, endeavoured to justify him by the assertion, that he was not free in his actions, but stood under the influence of Pharaoh, who selfishly wished to avail himself of the national catastrophe for enlarging his own power: however, this is in direct opposition, not only with the whole spirit and tenour of the narrative, which everywhere introduces Joseph as the sole originator of the policy; but with the explicit statement of the text: "Go," said the king, who seems to have freed himself from all cares and difficulties of government, "Go to

gone. 16. And Joseph said, Give your cattle; and I will give you *corn* for your cattle, if the money is gone. 17. And they brought their cattle to Joseph: and Joseph gave them bread for the horses, and for the cattle of the flocks, and for the cattle of the herds, and for the asses: and he supported them with bread for all their cattle in that year. 18. And when that year was ended, they came to him the following year, and said to him, We will not

Joseph; what he will say to you, you shall do" (xli. 55). It has been urged, on the other side, that Joseph's power was, after all, too limited to enable him to carry out such important plans on his own account: for he could, without the king's permission, not invite his family to come to Egypt, nor assign to them abodes in that country, nor even bury his father in Canaan. But all these objections are fallacious. Joseph had distinctly promised to his brothers habitations in Goshen, before he had in the least communicated with the king (xlv. 10); and he was so certain of his power to inter his father in the sepulchre of his ancestors, that he at once *swore* it to him by the most sacred oath then known in the family of Abraham (vers. 29—31). Further, the final arrangements with regard to the settlement of Jacob and his sons were designedly left to Pharaoh himself, that they might the more strikingly appear as inviolable political concessions. And, lastly, even if Joseph's authority should have been restricted in every other respect, it was certainly unbounded with regard to the collection of the corn in the years of plenty, and its distribution in the years of scarcity; the office, not before existing, was expressly created for Joseph; and the king left to his unfettered judgment the remedy of a misfortune which his superior wisdom had foreseen.—Nor is the reason advanced by others more probable, that, as Joseph was Pharaoh's steward, it was his duty to consult his interests in every way; for this argument would just admit the charge which it proposes to remove, and would let Joseph appear as a narrow-minded courtier unable to rise to large political views, and as the servant of a grasping despot, instead of the chief-ruler of a great people.—The opposite mode of vindication has been as unsuccessfully attempted by those who maintain that in fact Joseph's measures proved a great benefit to the people, because only when the whole land had become the property of the crown, a comprehensive and efficient system of irrigation by canals was feasible: but could the wisdom of Joseph find no means of combining a strong government with reasonable liberty and independence of the people? Was it necessary to degrade in order to maintain them? For their physical subsistence the Egyptians were compelled to sacrifice every boon which distinguishes the citizen and dignifies the man.

After the failure of all these expedients, there remained but two others possible; namely, to misrepresent the Hebrew text, and to interpret it in some arbitrary manner. The former alternative has been boldly resorted to by Josephus (Ant. II. vii. 7): he observes, on no solid authority whatever, that at the end of the seven years of famine, Joseph restored to the people of Egypt the lands which by right then belonged to the king, and imposed upon them only the former tax of the fifth part of the produce; they were rejoiced to be again owners of their lands; "and by this means Joseph procured for himself greater authority among the Egyptians, and for the king greater love from his subjects." This would indeed have been a policy more in harmony with the general benevolence of Joseph, though it would have been still more magnanimous not even temporarily

hide *it* from my lord: but our money is spent; our herds of cattle also have *passed* into *the hands of* my lord; there is nothing left before my lord, except our bodies and our lands: 19. Wherefore shall we die before thy eyes, both we and our land? buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be subjected to Pharaoh: and give *us* seed, that we may live, and not die, and that the land do not lie waste. 20. And Joseph bought all the land of

to have deprived the people of their property, and to have made them, not even *morally*, the tenants of the kings. However, that statement is both against the Biblical narrative, *and against history*; but it cannot be surprising in an author who, in other respects also, has fashioned the story in accordance with his own views of right and probability.

The second opinion above stated has been advanced by some modern expositors who, intending to gloze over the objections by a dexterous evasion, maintain, that we must not "give a rigid European form to loose and metaphorical Oriental expressions"; the terms "buying and selling" are used in an "indefinite lax sense"; *to buy* is simply *to acquire*, and *servants* means merely *tenants*, not *slaves* (*Kitto*, History of Palestine i. 124). But what will remain certain, if by an unceremonious and dictatorial principle, all precision is denied to Biblical language, conveniently fancied to bear the character of dim and undefined vagueness. To vindicate one passage, the whole Bible is desperately sacrificed. But even if we take those words in the mildest acceptation which they possibly admit, the fact remains, that the Egyptians, deprived of every property, could no longer regard as their own the lands they cultivated, but held them only at the pleasure and caprice of the ruler; and that they were compelled to hear the humiliating compact distinctly pronounced by Joseph, "I have this day *bought you and your lands* for Pharaoh" (ver. 23).

We are, therefore, obliged to find another and more plausible clue to Joseph's policy. In order to arrive at a well-established opinion, it seems the more advisable briefly to sketch those measures, as they have, in many particulars, been differently understood.

1. During the seven years of plenty, Joseph ordered the people to deliver up to him the fifth part of the produce of the land (xli. 34); from which is evident, on the one hand, that before that time the tax was materially smaller; and, on the other hand, that even then the royal power must have been considerable; which circumstance is confirmed by the patient submission with which the people later suffered the deepest ignominy, without being tempted to rise in sedition or revolt against an oppressive policy.

2. Besides collecting that impost, Joseph "gathered all the food in the good years" (xli. 35); which undoubtedly means, that he *bought* the corn from the peasants (else it would not have been different from a tax), though, no doubt, for a very trifling compensation. It is certainly a mistake to suppose that the stores gathered by Joseph consisted in that one-fifth part only demanded as a tax; for if so, the people, possessing four-fifths of the rich crops, would have had no occasion to implore Joseph's assistance, who, on his part, would have been unable to afford it for any length of time. But it may be asked, why did the Egyptians sell all their corn if they knew that a period of scarcity was impending? Were they *forced* to sell it? It is difficult to suppose such tyrannical arbitrariness. Were they not aware that they would later have to repurchase their stores at a very high price? Their impression seems, therefore, to have been that Joseph, the favoured of the

Egypt for Pharaoh; for the Egyptians sold every man his field, because the famine prevailed over them: so the land became Pharaoh's. 21. And as for the people, he removed them to the cities from *one* end of the boundaries of Egypt to the *other* end of it. 22. Only the land of the priests he did not buy; for the priests had a portion *assigned to them* by Pharaoh; and they ate their portion which Pharaoh gave them: therefore they did not sell their lands.

Deity, the great benefactor of the land, would, in the time of want, furnish them the grain *gratuitously*; but they were doomed to cruel disappointment: at the commencement of the famine "they cried to Pharaoh for bread" (xli. 55); but Joseph *sold* them corn (ver. 56); and when their money was exhausted, then, at least, hoping to be furnished with the necessaries of life from the abundance of the royal granaries, they came to Joseph with the request, "Give us bread; for why should we die in thy presence? for the money is gone" (ver. 15); but they received the cold reply, "bring me your cattle, if your money is gone; and I will give you corn for your cattle" (ver. 16). The conditions were, therefore, *not* "first proposed by the Egyptians," as has often been maintained with convenient complacency. Unless it is supposed that the people felt complete confidence in Joseph's generous qualities, their levity in disposing of their corn is so inconceivable, that it has been conjectured, that they were kept in ignorance concerning the impending season of failing crops, and that, when Joseph gathered the corn, "he discovered to no one the reason why he did so": but this is more than improbable; the dreams of Pharaoh, communicated to *all* the wise men of Egypt (xli.8), naturally became known to the whole people; while their interpretation was spread through the land by the public procession of Joseph when he became grand-vizier, and is probably implied in the Egyptian name given to him on that occasion (xli 45). Though, therefore, Joseph's measure of buying up all corn effectually prevented its exportation to foreign countries and saved it for Egypt; it was clearly conceived with the view, later unflinchingly carried out, of totally subduing and curbing the Egyptian people; and an act of ostensible sympathy was converted into shrewd despotism.

3. It appears that the money of the people sufficed during *five* years to purchase corn; in the *sixth*, they gave their cattle, which they were unable to feed any longer (ver. 17); in the *following* or seventh year (ver. 18), they offered their persons and their lands; and as it was the last year of the famine, Joseph, on their request, gave them corn for seed (vers. 19, 24), that in the next year already the first new crops might be secured, and the fifth part be paid as a tax; for thenceforth government had an immediate interest in the cultivation of the soil.

4. The people in offering *themselves and their lands together* (vers. 18, 19), thereby naturally intimated that they desired to work their *own* fields for Pharaoh; this is clear by the spirit of their request; and the loss of their landed property would, indeed, have been a sacrifice heavy enough to be demanded at one time and for the provision of one year; but as the period of distress and famine approached its end, Joseph, impatient to pursue his policy to the utmost consequences, and eager to use an opportunity which, perhaps, might never recur, indeed, bought both lands and owners; but heartlessly separating the one from the other, transplanted the people "from one end of the boundary of Egypt to the other": anxious to create and to keep alive in their minds a feeling of perfect de-

23. Then Joseph said to the people, Behold, I have bought you this day and your land for Pharaoh: lo, *here is* seed for you, and you shall sow the land. 24. And when the harvest cometh, you shall give the fifth *part* to Pharaoh, and four parts shall be your own, for seed of the field, and for your food, and for those of your house*holds*, and for

pendence, unconcerned at tearing asunder all the dear and sacred ties which for generations had bound the families to their hereditary soil, and indifferent at the sight of wandering millions becoming strangers in their own country; his clear but cold intellect rejoiced in the advantage thus gained of breaking the last remnant of popular power necessarily arising from long local associations, and of creating a populace of submissive and homeless slaves, lost to all higher political and moral aspirations, and absorbed in the toil and drudgery of servitude.

But let us here pause to enter into the chief question which in this portion concerns us. Was it indeed the intention of the Biblical writer to represent Joseph so unfavourably, as the instrument of an ambitious tyrant, and the destroyer of all power and influence of the people? *This was certainly his intention*, as clearly as his account of Joseph's capricious conduct towards his brothers; and as with regard to the latter, so with respect to Egypt, he introduced him as the medium of Providence for the realisation of predestined plans. The prophecy had been given to Abraham, that his descendants would be oppressed in a strange land (xv. 13); by which, as Jacob had every reason to believe, Egypt was meant. Now it is historically certain that the Hebrews were ill-treated, from fear, by the Pharaohs only, while the *people* of Egypt cultivated with them an amicable intercourse: therefore the picture of the social revolution here inserted is designed to show how the power of the *kings* was strengthened for the prosecution of a wanton policy; while the sympathy of the *people* itself enfeebled and enthralled, was of no avail or practical importance to the Hebrews. Hence, the author concludes this section with a remark distinctly leading over, and pointing to, that later time, when their astonishing increase dictated the cruel measures for making them at least harmless (ver. 27); and he in this place for the first time clearly mentions Israel as a growing *community*. But though he characterises here also Joseph as the agent of Providence, he does not represent him as having that *consciousness* of his mission which he manifested in the treatment of the brothers; he describes him simply as the able and active statesman, gratefully working for the interests of his royal master; and he nowhere, as he so often and so touchingly did in the case of the brothers, makes him in any way sympathise with the distress of the sufferers: the sublimity of Joseph's character consistently displayed before, is certainly impaired; for from a servant of God he becomes a servant of Pharaoh; from a prophet, anxious to maintain the justice of Divine government, he is turned into a callous politician, eager to strengthen the hands of despotism. The place, therefore, which this section occupies in the organism of the Pentateuch is this: the author, acquainted with the *fact* of the sovereignty of the Egyptian kings over their land, and believing that this arrangement in favour of the monarchs was effected by Joseph, skilfully embodied it in his narrative, so as to make it the intermediate link between the predictions given to Abraham in Canaan, and their fulfilment in a later age; but, in doing this, he was unmindful of the charges to which he exposed Joseph's conduct, and in this instance neglecting the characteristic spirit of *Biblical* history, which is that of strictly compensating justice, or of close connection between the deeds of man and his destinies, he unfolded the unspeakable

food for your little ones. 25. And they said, Thou hast saved our lives: let us find grace in the sight of my lord, and we will be servants to Pharaoh. 26. And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt to this day, *that* Pharaoh *should receive* the fifth *part;* except the land of the priests alone, *which* did not become Pharaoh's.—27.

misery of the Egyptians, without in the least indicating the sins and offences by which they had deserved it.

5. It is now necessary to consider the *historical* basis of this episode. It is generally asserted that the facts here stated are related by profane writers also. But this is true only with regard to some general features. Herodotus (ii. 109) observes: "It is also said that this king (Sesostris) divided the country amongst all the Egyptians, giving an equal square allotment to each; and from thence he drew his revenues, having required them to pay a fixed tax every year." It is obvious that this is very different from the statements of our text; it is almost the reverse; some conqueror (whether Sesostris or not — for the mythical history of Egypt ascribes to him all great institutions) portioned out the land to the people; he appears as their benefactor, not their oppressor; he *gives* them land, instead of *demanding* it; he is already in undisputed possession of the ground, instead of then only acquiring it; and it is but a poor subterfuge to limit the remark of Herodotus to his "crown lands." But the agreement between the Greek historian and the account of Genesis is decided and important. The king is the owner of the land, and the people are his tenants or farmers, who, for a fixed annual rent, cultivate the ground for him; so that the dependent state of vassalage, the origin of which is here ascribed to Joseph, is maintained by Herodotus also.

The same historian writes (ii. 168), that the priests, and besides them the warriors only, possessed land; the latter holding "twelve auroræ free from tribute". This seems, at first sight, to be at variance with our narrative stating that "the land of the priests alone was not bought by Joseph," and "their land alone did not pass into the hands of Pharaoh" (vers. 22, 26). But, in fact, the military men were not really landed proprietors, but received their acres as a fief, which, therefore, could be taken away from them by the will of the monarch; so that the expression of Diodorus Siculus, that "the third part of the land was the property of the warrior caste," is to be modified; and the remark of Strabo, that "the territory was divided into three equal portions," is to be understood accordingly.

The conclusions, then, which offer themselves, are these. The *fact*, indeed, of the dependence of the people on the crown, with regard to their landed property, is mentioned by the classical authors also; but the manner in which that dependence originated *is the peculiar and exclusive feature of the narrative of Genesis*; and it only remains to contemplate the degree of *historical probability* that can be attributed to the events narrated. Without anticipating the judgment of the reader, we shall simply state the chief difficulties: 1. Joseph *predicts* the nature of the future crops after *dreams* of Pharaoh. 2. There are just *seven* years of plenty, and *seven* years of famine (comp. 2 Sam. xxiv. 13; 2 Ki. viii. 1). 3. The inundations of the Nile cease for a period without parallel in historical annals. 4. The dearth and famine occur during *the same time* on the *whole earth* (see p. 447). 5. The produce, during the period of abundance, was "like the sand of the sea" (xli. 49), and sufficed for the subsistence of all mankind during the period of hunger (xli. 56, 57). If we add to this the *internal objections*, that the people, acquainted with the approach of a season of dearth, should have sold all their corn; that Joseph, so kind and affection-

And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the land of Goshen, and they had possessions therein, and were fruitful, and multiplied exceedingly.

28. And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years: so the days of Jacob, the years of his life, were a hundred and forty-seven years. 29. And when the days approached for Israel to die, he called his son Joseph, and said to him, If, I pray thee, I have found grace in thy sight, put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, and do to me kindness and truth: bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt: 30. But I will lie with my fathers, and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their burying-place. And he said, I will do in accordance with thy words. 31. And he said, Swear to me: and he swore to him. And Israel reclined upon the head of the bed.

ate, should, by a perfidious policy, have plunged a whole nation into permanent misery; and the other discrepancies above pointed out: it cannot be difficult to arrive at a safe decision.

We may, therefore, thus sum up our remarks: the measures of Joseph are mentioned to explain the possibility of the unmitigated slavery later inflicted upon the Hebrews by the Pharaohs of Egypt; but, though apparently accounting for a territorial organisation really existing in Egypt, they are unsupported by any extraneous authority, are in some points conflicting in themselves, and are in others at variance with the character of Joseph before attributed to him. However, it would be bold to deny, that this narrative is based upon genuine historical traditions regarding some great political changes introduced by Joseph; this supposition is confirmed by the very contrast of its spirit and tenour with the usual principles of Biblical history, as above pointed out; but it would be premature, and extremely uncertain, in the present fragmentary state of Egyptian history, to fix by a hazardous attempt the exact nature of those reforms, whether they consisted in a better regulation of the public revenues, or in the establishment of the absolute sovereignty of royal power by some comprehensive agrarian scheme.

28—31. Jacob, long since prepared to enter the eternal rest, was at last, by increasing decrepitude, reminded of his approaching dissolution. The natural wish, almost universally prevalent among the ancient nations, of being buried in the land of the ancestors, or in the tomb of relatives or dear friends, was, in Jacob, enhanced by the religious sentiment, that Canaan was the land of promise, where his descendants should wield the sceptre of dominion, and unfurl the banner of truth (see p. 294). Knowing that Joseph alone had the power of securing his interment in Canaan, he pledged him by the holy oath of the Hebrew covenant not to deny him this last and greatest service of love, and "to do to him kindness and truth." So comforted, the exhausted patriarch calmly awaited the summons of death.

V.—THE ADOPTION OF EPHRAIM AND MANASSEH.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

SUMMARY.—Jacob acknowledges the two sons of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim, who were born before the settlement of his family in Egypt, as his own sons, and concedes to them, in the future Hebrew commonwealth, equal authority with the rest of his own children, and a double portion in the land of Canaan promised to his descendants; but in blessing them, he gives the preference to the younger, Ephraim, who should occupy the more prominent position, and form the more powerful tribe. The other sons of Joseph, born after Jacob's immigration, should be incorporated in the families of their two elder brothers.

1. And it happened after these things, that Joseph was told, Behold, thy father *is* ill: and he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. 2. And Jacob was

1—22. The principal statements of the following section refer so plainly and unmistakeably to events in the later history of the Hebrew nation, they have so little of the obscurity or indistinctness usually peculiar to prophetic compositions, that their general import has but very seldom been misunderstood, and that, with perhaps the only exception of the lives of Jacob and Esau, they furnish the most instructive insight into the nature of the anticipative style of the Pentateuch. This is true to such an extent, that the historical books furnish not only illustrations, but perfect parallels of our narrative.

The book of Joshua relates, that the descendants of Joseph addressed that general in terms of complaint: "Why hast thou given me but ONE LOT AND ONE PORTION to inherit, since I am a great people? The hill is not enough for us." To which Joshua replied: "Thou art a great people, and hast great power; thou shalt not have ONE LOT ONLY; mount Ephraim is too narrow for thee; go therefore to the woodcountry, and settle there in the land of the Perizzites and of the Rephaim" (Josh. xvii. 14—18; comp. xiv. 4). This passage is evidently the first and broadest historical basis of the transaction here recorded. "I give thee," said Jacob to Joseph, "one portion above thy brethren, which I take of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow" (ver. 22). Yet it would not be correct to say, simply, that the tribe of Joseph, originally forming one of the twelve tribes of the Hebrews, in the course of time grew so great in numbers, in influence, and territorial power, that the division into two distinct sections became necessary or advisable. For if so, why was this not done with respect to the tribe of Judah, seldom much inferior, and often considerably superior, to that of Joseph in political authority? And what should be the standard for determining whether a division was requisite or not? Or is it supposed that the occupation by the Josephites of lands *both in the east and the west of the Jordan*, either suggested or rendered necessary the separation into two tribes? This view cannot be defended; since the people of Manasseh and Ephraim did *not* respectively hold abodes on the two sides of the river; for the former lived partly in the east and partly in the west of it. Further, who should decide in a matter of such high practical importance? A tribe, by being divided into two, at once obtained double weight in the national councils, and grew vastly in dignity and mo-

informed, saying, Behold, thy son Joseph cometh to thee: and Israel strengthened himself, and sat up on the bed. 3. And Jacob said to Joseph, God Almighty appeared to me in Luz in the land of Canaan, and blessed me, 4. And said to me, Behold, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people; and will give this land to thy seed after thee *for*

ral influence by its twofold organisation in heads of tribes, houses, and families, both during the times of peace and of war. It is true, that we perceive in Hebrew history the desire of preserving the number of *twelve* tribes, adhered to by the Ishmaelites and other Eastern nations also, no doubt in consequence of the astronomical significance of that number; and that, therefore, the progeny of Joseph is reckoned as *one* tribe where it was deemed necessary to introduce Levi also, as in the last prophecies of Jacob and of Moses, or at the census of the Hebrew *families* in the desert; whereas, in the political or military arrangements of the community, Manasseh and Ephraim are stated separately, because there Levi is not mentioned as an independent tribe. But nobody will seriously contend, that this *ideal* or *literary* consideration exercised any decisive influence on the real and actual distribution of the Hebrew people; or that whenever a minor tribe became unable to maintain its independence, the bipartition of a more powerful one necessarily took place: for though, for instance, the tribe of Simeon gradually became so insignificant that it almost merged in that of Judah, no new tribe was on that account formed to replace it.

We may, therefore, thus historically explain the origin of the two tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. The descendants of Joseph grew, at an early period, into one of the most numerous tribes of the Hebrews. In the second year after the departure from Egypt they counted 72,700 warriors, whilst the tribe of Judah consisted only of 47,600 (Num. i. 27, 33, 35): at the end of the wanderings, when the census was taken in the plains of Moab, their number was 85,200, against 76,500 of Judah (Num. xxvi. 22, 34, 37): their influence was powerful enough to cause some important modifications in the social and agrarian constitution of the people (Num. xxxvi. 1—5): and the number of the soldiers capable of assisting David in the establishment of his dynasty was 38,800, exclusive of the men of Manasseh in the east of the Jordan; whereas the armed force of Judah is stated at 6,800 (1 Chr. xii. 24, 30, 31, 37). The authority of the sheikh or the chief of the tribe was, in a material point of view, so limited, and rested so essentially on purely moral influence, that it was unable to unite and to govern so large a population, as soon as several families, stimulated by ambition, and confiding in their own power, rose in rivalry, and disputed with each other the first rank in the community. Such opposition existed, indeed, within the tribe of Judah also; it is embodied in his earliest genealogy, in the birth of the *twins*, Perez and Zerah, after the destruction of Er and Onan, and in the impetuous struggle of Perez, which caused "a breach" in his house. But it appears that the geographical position of the province of Judah, extending to the very borders of the desert, and exposing the territory to perpetual invasions of daring and valiant tribes from the south and east, forced the people from the beginning to a closer organisation and a stricter unity, naturally much increased when Judah became the ruling tribe, and the centre of a powerful kingdom, with a large army and a strong executive. But in the tribe of Joseph, the most determined emulation of different branches seems to have commenced at a very early

an everlasting possession. 5. And now thy two sons, who were born to thee in the land of Egypt before I came to thee into Egypt, *are* mine; Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine, like Reuben and Simeon. 6. But thy issue, which thou hast begotten after them, shall be thine; they shall be called after the name of their brothers in their inheritance. 7. And as for me, when I came from Padan,

stage of Hebrew history; and it is here embodied in the preference which Jacob gave to the younger Ephraim, but which at first was not approved of by Joseph himself (vers. 17—19). Nor was the rivalry within that tribe confined to the families of Manasseh and Ephraim; other branches aspired later to a distinguished position, and even to independence; but they were at length compelled permanently to range themselves under one or the other of the two chief divisions. These interesting facts seem to be referred to in the words of Jacob: "But thy issue which thou hast begotten after them, shall be thine; they shall be called after the name of their brothers in their inheritance" (ver. 6). Thus we need not be surprised that, in the Old Testament, other sons of Joseph besides Ephraim and Manasseh are nowhere mentioned; the families represented by them, though at one period ambitiously entering the lists in the contest for superiority, were later so completely absorbed in the larger communities, that they ceased to possess any individual distinction or power, and ultimately vanished from the public rolls.

When the commotion among the people of Joseph had in a great measure subsided, and the internal struggle gave way to a greater consolidation of parties, two groups of families remained to dispute with each other the chief authority. Neither of them, however, possessed for a considerable time sufficient power to force the other into submission. For their relative influence underwent very material fluctuations. While, shortly after the exodus from Egypt, the Ephraimites surpassed the men of Manasseh in numerical strength by upwards of 8,000 soldiers, and then bore one of the four great banners of the Hebrew hosts, with Manasseh and Benjamin following their standard; the men of Manasseh, immediately before the entrance into Canaan, exceeded the Ephraimites by more than 20,000 men (Num. i. 33,35; x. 22—24; xxvi. 34,37; cf. Ps. lxxx. 2): which changes, though very considerable, may be readily accounted for by the supposition that the minor families, in our chapter called the *later* or younger branches (ver. 6), now joined Ephraim, and now Manasseh. A spirit of jealousy was roused, and imperceptibly wrought mutual estrangement. Thus it was not only natural, but almost inevitable, considering the unsettled condition of the Hebrews in the earliest periods of the conquest, that these two groups of clans should constitute themselves into two separate communities, with independent internal organisations, or that *they should form two distinct tribes.* The division was confirmed by several collateral circumstances. A large portion of the people of Manasseh felt a predilection for breeding of cattle; when they, therefore, on their way from Egypt to Canaan, found the districts of Gilead abounding in choice pasture grounds, they there took up their abodes, together with the men of Reuben and Gad: while the whole of the Ephraimites, preferring the excitement of war and adventure, passed the Jordan to acquire wealth and territory. A union between the two rival families could now scarcely any longer be contemplated or expected; and the circumstance that the separation originated considerably before the conquest of Canaan, and already in the east of the Jordan, throws light upon the fact, that it is in our section traced back to Jacob

I saw Rachel die in the land of Canaan on the way, when *there was* still a distance of land to come to Ephrath: and I buried her there on the way of Ephrath, that *is* Bethlehem.—8. And Israel saw Joseph's sons, and said, Who *are* these? 9. And Joseph said to his father, They *are* my sons, whom God hath given me here. And he said, Bring them, I pray thee, to me, and I will bless them.

himself, who alludes to the *future* occupation of the Holy Land (ver. 22). It is true, that one part of the men of Manasseh settled likewise in the *west* of the Jordan; but, in doing this, they maintained the distinction between the two tribes which had then been long and firmly established. This is certain, from an occurrence preserved in the book of the Judges. When the Midianites oppressed and in every way annoyed the Israelites, Gideon, the son of Abi-ezer, from the town Ophrah *in the western part of Manasseh*, gathered the soldiers of the northern provinces, and totally defeated the Midianites and their powerful and most numerous allies. But *he did not invite the Ephraimites* to take part in the battles; although a due regard for the success of his expedition later urged him to ask their assistance in the pursuit of the fleeing enemy. This event shows, likewise, why a part of the people of Manasseh, not sharing the taste of the rest for nomadic pursuits, but more intent upon military fame, had, like the Ephraimites, left the eastern provinces and sought lands in the west. The victories of Gideon were, indeed, among the most glorious feats performed in the time of the Judges, and they were long remembered with praise and enthusiastic admiration. They inspired such confidence and respect, that the greater portion of the Israelites spontaneously offered to the hero the royal dignity, and promised to make it hereditary in his family. But Gideon, modest and unostentatious by nature, felt that prudence recommended him to decline the tempting honour. For the jealous rivalry within the tribe of Joseph, or between the branches of Manasseh and Ephraim, had continued in the west, as it had commenced in the east of the Jordan. Ephraim coveted and acquired cities within the boundaries of Manasseh; whereas Manasseh occupied important parts of the territory of Issachar and Asher. But it may be readily imagined, that in the west the Ephraimites maintained an easy ascendancy over the men of Manasseh, who were separated from a large portion of their kinsmen, from whom they could not even expect any moral support: for the two tribes and a half in the east of the river, afraid that living far from the holy Tabernacle of the Lord, they might be regarded as dwelling in an unclean land, found it advisable to erect a conspicuous altar to the God of Israel, lest at some future period they should either be required to emigrate from their property and to settle in the west, or should be deemed not to belong to the worshippers of God and to the chosen people, because they were secluded from the rest by the river Jordan (Josh. xxii. 9—34). The Ephraimites, therefore, indignant that they had not been allowed to take a chief part in the wars against the Midianites, and apprehending that triumphs so signal and essential might secure to Manasseh a decided preponderance; severely and in the authoritative tone of conscious superiority, argued on that account with Gideon, who knew no other mode of appeasing their exasperation and gratifying their vanity, than by humbly acknowledging that their deeds had, in fact, been more important than his own. "What have I done," said he, "in comparison to you? Is not the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abi-ezer"? (Judg. viii. 1—3). When, therefore, the crown was placed

10. But the eyes of Israel were dim from old age, *so that* he could not see. And he brought them near to him; and he kissed them, and embraced them. 11. And Israel said to Joseph, I had not hoped to see thy face; and, behold, God hath allowed me to see thy seed also. 12. And Joseph brought them forth from his knees, and he prostrated himself before his face to the ground. 13. And

within his reach, afraid of rousing civil discord, and certain that the formation of a Hebrew monarchy would be premature, he replied: "God shall rule over you" (Judg. viii. 22); and thus endeavoured to strengthen the theocratical views of the nation. It appears, that at this time the prosperity and fame of both Manasseh and Ephraim were so considerable and so universally acknowledged, that then the blessing, mentioned in our narrative, became proverbial in Israel: "May the Lord make thee like Ephraim and Manasseh" (ver. 20); but the precedence in this formula assigned to the younger Ephraim points to his greater material power. However, the services which Gideon had rendered to the Hebrew tribes, were so considerable, and the veneration for his name became so deep and strong, that after his death, his sons, though living at Ophrah in Manasseh, exercised over Ephraim a moral influence powerful enough to be regarded as equivalent to royalty (Judg. ix. 2, 5). But it was impossible that this dependence, however lenient, should be long tolerated by the proud Ephraimites, so jealously watchful of their dignity. They, therefore, enabled Abimelech to gather troops, by the aid of which nearly the whole house of Gideon was extirpated (Judg. ix. 1—5). This deed is historically of peculiar importance. It marks the point, from which the power of Manasseh was more and more weakened, while that of Ephraim was more and more confirmed. Nor was any individual better fitted to indicate that transition than Abimelech, belonging to Manasseh by his father Gideon, and connected with Ephraim by his mother from Shechem (Judg. viii. 31). Henceforth the influence of the Ephraimites was so constantly progressive, that it soon obscured, and almost absorbed, not only the fraternal branch of Manasseh, but nearly all the northern and eastern tribes. Great reminiscences helped to give prestige to their name. Joshua, the conqueror of Canaan, was sprung from their tribe; Deborah, the sublime and heroic, judged within their territory; and soon Samuel, the man of undaunted energy, the true founder of an organised Hebrew commonwealth, was to be born in the same boundaries. The immediate consequence of Abimelech's carnage in Manasseh was his elevation to the throne; proclaimed king in Shechem, "he reigned over Israel three years" (Judges ix. 6, 22). But, though he was not possessed of qualities and virtues either for permanently maintaining or for rendering popular the monarchical form of government, he had given an example which, in due time, was revived and followed. The tribe of Ephraim, continuing its internal development, had in the latter part of the period of the Judges, grown so much in power and self-reliance, that it ventured to inveigh against Jephthah, after his brilliant victories over the Ammonites, with almost the same haughty language in which it had before indulged against Gideon, and from the same motives of jealous rivalry; though the ungovernable temper of Jephthah took severe and sanguinary revenge for that presumption. When, by a series of circumstances, the explanation of which would be foreign to our subject, the tribe of Judah, one of the first to conquer and to settle in western Canaan, arrived at royal power; the Ephraimites, after a short resistance in

Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand towards Israel's left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand towards Israel's right hand, and brought them near to him. 14. And Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid *it* upon Ephraim's head, who *was* the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, laying on his hands deliberately; for Manasseh *was* the firstborn. 15. And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham

favour of Ishbosheth, acknowledged indeed the sceptre of David, like all the other tribes: but even then continuing to foster their ambitious plans of sovereignty, and assuming the same attitude of opposition against Judah which they had before successfully occupied against Manasseh, they seized the very first opportunity offered by the neglect and failings of David's immediate successors, to place themselves at the head of the northern part of the people, which even in the time of that great monarch had claimed the larger share of political authority; and they established an independent kingdom, with an efficient army and a strong administration. Jeroboam, the first king, in order to make the separation from Judah more decided by breaking the strongest link of union, organised a distinct religious worship in Ephraim, and forbade his subjects to visit the temple of Jerusalem. From this time Ephraim was acknowledged as the dominant tribe of the north; it was not only designated with the name "house of Joseph," though this term originally, of course, comprised Manasseh also; but "Ephraim" became the name of the whole northern empire, which was so important in territory and population, that it assumed for itself alone, or received, the general and honoured appellation of "Israel," and that its re-union with the empire of Judah formed one of the most fervent hopes of the prophets in their descriptions of the strength and glory of the Hebrews. These facts sufficiently prove the vast ascendancy which the younger branch of Joseph's house ultimately obtained over the older lines; and if we add to this, that the province of Ephraim, partly conquered from a mighty enemy, and partly reclaimed from a primeval wilderness, was distinguished by exceeding fertility; that woody mountain-chains alternated with grassy highlands and luxurious plains and valleys; that numerous brooks rendered the labours of agriculture both easy and productive; and that, therefore, it was, in ancient times, as it is still, one of the most cultivated parts of Palestine; that it contained the sacred mountains, Ebal and Gerizim, and many towns of the greatest political and religious importance, as Shiloh, for a very considerable time the station of the Tabernacle; further, Bethel, Ramah, and Shechem, each of which could boast of a long and varied history; and that it occupied a central position, peculiarly favourable to the extension and maintenance of dominion: we shall understand the force of Jacob's words, when Joseph reminded him of the birthright of Manasseh: "I know it, my son, I know it: he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great: but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become an abundance of people" (ver. 19). It will, further, be understood, on the one hand, that the division of the tribe of Joseph was more than "a political, priestly, or mythical, idea"; and on the other hand, that it does not involve a formal transfer of the primogeniture from Reuben, believed to have forfeited it by immorality (xlix. 4), upon Joseph, accordingly receiving two portions, or made the father of two tribes (ver. 22); for the words "Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine like Reuben and Simeon"

and Isaac walked, the God who was my shepherd from my birth to this day; 16. The Angel who redeemed me from all evil, may bless the youths; and let in them my name be called, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them increase into a vast multitude in the midst of the land.—17. And when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it displeased him: and he held up his father's hand to remove it from

(ver. 5) signify, that the former two *grand-sons* of Jacob shall be regarded as founders of separate tribes exactly like all his *sons*; it seems, indeed, that a later time adopted the view just referred to; but the first Book of Chronicles (v. 1, 2), which makes that statement, by adding, that "the genealogies were not reckoned after the birthright *of Joseph*," sufficiently indicates that his primogeniture was never *practically* acknowledged, but that it was supposed as a *historical theory*, in order to account for, or to justify, by a familiar and plausible notion, the *historical fact* of the double tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh: and in the chapter under consideration, we find no reference whatever to such conception. It must, however, be observed, in conclusion, that this section does not introduce events later than the second part of the Judges, when Ephraim had triumphed over the competition of Manasseh, and had secured a proud position among the northern tribes: it does not allude to the rupture with Judah; nor to the idolatrous worship in the empire of Israel, nor to the *kings* who would spring from Ephraim: and though the two former points may have been designedly suppressed in the *blessing* of Joseph; yet, if considered in connection with the third omission, they are of decided importance for the chronology of this chapter.

We have now but briefly to examine our narrative in its connection with the lives of the patriarchs.

When illness supervened to the increasing weakness of Jacob, and threatened to accelerate his dissolution, Joseph hastened to him from the royal residence, stimulated partly by filial love, and partly by the desire of conferring with him on a subject of the very highest moment for the future of his house. He had married an *Egyptian* wife, and had by her, during his separation from his relatives, and in a foreign land, become the father of his two first-born sons. Therefore, not groundlessly apprehending that his children might be excluded from the hopes and the promised inheritance of the Hebrews; he brought Ephraim and Manasseh, then about twenty years old (comp. xli. 50), before Jacob, in order to obtain his pledge of their unqualified admission as members of his family (ver. 1). But these thoughts had occupied Jacob not less seriously than Joseph. When he, therefore, was informed of his son's visit, he was determined finally to arrange the matter (ver. 2). In order to prove that he was invested with the lawful authority for unrestricted decision, he mentioned the manifestation of God which, after the period of his internal repentance and atonement, had been granted to him at Bethel, in confirmation of a Divine vision before accorded to him at the same place, when on his flight from Canaan to Mesopotamia (xxxv. 11, 12; comp. xxviii. 13—15). In virtue of the blessings which he then received, as the spiritual heir of Abraham and Isaac, he was enabled to bestow blessings on his own descendants; and in virtue of the promise which was then made to him regarding the possession of Canaan, he was entitled to divide the land among his progeny according to his own option (vers. 3, 4). He, therefore, adopted the two eldest sons of Joseph, securing to them in every respect equal rights with

Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. 18. And Joseph said to his father, Not so, my father: for this *is* the firstborn; put thy right hand upon his head. 19. And his father refused, and said, I know *it*, my son, I know *it*: he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great: but his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become an abundance of people. 20. And he blessed them on that day, saying, By thee shall Israel bless, say-

his own sons, and appointing them as the chiefs over their younger brothers (vers. 5, 6). Thus Joseph obtained from his father even more than he had intended to solicit. It can scarcely be doubted, that this great partiality in favour of Joseph is in our narrative understood as an acknowledgment of his eminent services for his family, of his noble character, and of his unchanged piety in spite of the temptations of a brilliant position: but it cannot be conceived as a "substitution of the prerogatives of merit for those of nature"; for, as we have remarked, the transaction recorded in our chapter does not imply a change in the primogeniture, which, according to the Mosaic law, could not be transferred from the firstborn of the less beloved to the firstborn of the more favoured wife (Deut. xxi. 15—17). Yet it appears that Jacob was rejoiced at the opportunity of distinguishing the eldest son of Rachel, whom, after the lapse of so many years, he still loved with undiminished affection. He felt that he honoured her memory by the peculiar privilege which he granted to Joseph. If these were his sentiments, it was but natural that he should, on that occasion, mention Rachel; and as his thoughts had long since wandered to his eternal rest, and he had shown such deep anxiety with regard to the place of his own burial, he, in sorrowful terms, reminded Joseph that his mother had been interred in a forlorn spot; and he described it with all possible distinctness, that he might help to protect it against oblivion (ver. 7; comp. xxxv. 16—20). The allusion, therefore, to Rachel's grave, forms an essential part of the patriarch's last instructions.

Only after he had, of his own accord, fulfilled the secret wish of Joseph, he noticed the presence of Manasseh and Ephraim; for his eyes were dim with old age; and breaking forth in spontaneous expressions of gratitude to God who had so marvellously guided Joseph and himself, he intimated his intention of blessing his grand-sons (vers. 8—12). Joseph is not represented as endowed with the gift of prophecy, or as favoured with direct Divine inspirations (see p. 411). He expected, therefore, that the greater blessing would be bestowed upon his firstborn son, Manasseh. But Jacob, capable of penetrating with his mental eye into unborn ages, gave the preference to Ephraim, because he knew, that though the younger son, he would found the more powerful tribe. He designedly laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, and his left upon the head of Manasseh (vers. 13, 14). The imposition of hands, an old symbol of conferring certain powers or blessings, and forming a part of the sacrificial ritual also, became later, both in the Synagogue and the Church, a usual mode of initiation into sacred offices, but was discontinued among the Jews about the year 350 of the vulgar era, in the time of the patriarch Hillel II. The *right* hand was naturally regarded as superior to the left; and in auguries, it was considered as auspicious, while the left was generally held ominous.—Jacob pronounced the benediction in measured language, and with threefold invocation. As he viewed the *religious truth*, understood and cherished by his ancestors, as the source of all true blessings, he

ing, May God make thee as Ephraim and Manasseh: and he put Ephraim before Manasseh. 21. And Israel said to Joseph, Behold, I die: but God will be with you, and bring you back to the land of your fathers. 22. And I give to thee one portion above thy brethren, which I take out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow.

began by commending the happiness of his grand-sons to the God of Abraham and of Isaac: but gratefully remembering that the same Deity, through His visible aid and agency, had beneficently watched over his own checquered career, both by satisfying his *material wants*, and his *moral cravings*, leading him from poverty to wealth, from dangers to safety, and from sin to peace and harmony of mind; he concluded with two corresponding supplications to "God the shepherd" who "had brought him to green pastures and to waters of rest, who had dispelled his fears even when threatened with the shadow of death, and who had guided him in the path of righteousness for His name's sake" (Ps. xxiii. 1—4; lxxx. 2). After so much mercy, he might well indulge in the hope, that his house would grow into a numerous and flourishing community; and he might think himself entitled to expect the glorification of his family, in an eminent degree, from the descendants of that favourite son who, by his wisdom and his virtues, had made the Hebrew name illustrious over the whole globe (vers. 15, 16). Joseph might well wonder at the marked preference given to the younger son (vers. 17, 18). What had Ephraim done to deserve the distinction? and what had Manasseh committed to forfeit it? We have, indeed, on more than one previous occasion seen the superiority transferred from the elder to the younger brother; as in the instance of Cain and Abel, of Ishmael and Isaac, and of Esau and Jacob; but in all these cases there existed some obvious reason to justify the change; it was base jealousy which rendered Cain unworthy of the Divine favour; Ishmael, the son of a bond-woman, preferred the life of the marauding archer in the desert to the peaceful pursuits of the nomad; and Esau showed a most blameable indifference to the higher or spiritual privileges of his family. But no reproach whatever attaches to Manasseh, whom, indeed, Joseph seems to have loved fondly, and whose prerogatives he was anxious to protect. If, therefore, the transaction related in our chapter were simply a personal occurrence in the house of Jacob, the preference accorded to Ephraim would be arbitrary partiality, which could but vaguely be palliated by the idea that it was an election by the grace of God, and as such not subject to the ordinary standard of human justice and the test of human reason. But this defect in the composition loses its weight if it is remembered that our narrative is designed to embody, in a transparently prophetic form, the undeniable historical facts which we have above developed. When, therefore, Joseph desired to redress what he believed to be a serious and untoward mistake on the part of Jacob, the latter repeated in emphatic words what he had before but generally expressed by a symbol, and added another formal blessing, which later became proverbial in Israel, and in which he advisedly mentioned the younger before the elder brother.—As he thus had adopted Ephraim and Manasseh as his own sons (comp. ver. 5), it might appear that he intended Joseph to form *three* tribes; but as this was not the case, he found it necessary to add, that Joseph should receive *one* portion more than his brothers in the land which he was certain would, after severe and protracted warfare, be conquered from the Canaanites.

VI.—JACOB'S LAST ADDRESS, DEATH, AND BURIAL; JOSEPH'S LAST INJUNCTIONS.

CHAPTERS XLIX AND L.

CHAPTER XLIX.

THE LAST ADDRESS OF JACOB, VERS. 1—28.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

A belief prevailed among nearly all ancient nations, that the human mind, at the approaching hour of death, is capable of penetrating into the mysteries of the future, and of distinctly revealing them in prophetic speech. We are on this point not restricted to obscure inferences. We find the idea clearly and explicitly stated by more than one classical author. Cicero observes: "When death is near, the mind assumes a much more divine character; and at such times, easily predicts the future." Socrates, when defending himself in the capital charge preferred against him, and foreseeing a condemnatory verdict, is recorded to have reminded the judges, that with death before his eyes, he was in that state which enables men to utter prophecies. Xenophon relates, in his "Institution of Cyrus," that this prince, when feeling his impending dissolution, summoned his sons and friends to his death-bed; and, in order to impress upon them the doctrine of immortality, used the following argument: "Nothing resembles death more closely than sleep; but it is in sleep that the soul of man appears most divine, and it is then that it foresees something of the future; for then, as it seems, it is most free." In a perfectly analogous manner, Pythagoras and other philosophers, according to Diodorus Siculus, considered it a natural consequence of the belief in immortality, that the soul, in the moment of death, becomes conscious of future events.—In harmony with these views, Greek and Roman writers not unfrequently introduce persons in the last stage of their existence predicting the destinies of those survivors who at that time particularly absorb their attention. Patroclus, mortally wounded, foretells, in Homer's Iliad, the immediate death of Hector, from the hand of Achilles; and when this prophecy was literally verified, Hector, in his last moments, augurs that Apollo and Paris would, at the Scæan gate, soon destroy Achilles, who, convinced of the truth and reality of such forebodings, exclaims: "I shall accept my fate whenever Jupiter and the other immortal gods choose to inflict it." In the Æneid of Virgil, the expiring Dido prophesies not only the chief incidents in the future life of Æneas, his laborious and exhausting wars with Turnus, the Rutulians, and the Latins; his separation from his beloved son, Iulus, when imploring assistance in Etruria; and his early death, unhonoured by the sacred rites of sepulture: but she alludes to the inextinguishable hatred and the sanguinary enmity that would rage between the Romans and the Carthaginians, and to Hannibal himself, who would avenge her sufferings, and as a fearful scourge of war, desolate the beautiful plains of Italy. In the same epic poem, Orodes, before closing his eyes in death, threatens his victorious antagonist, Mezentius, that he would not long enjoy his triumph, but would soon also be hurled into the lower regions: which menace, indeed, Mezentius haughtily scorns; but recognising the possibility of its fulfilment, he laughs "with mixed wrath." Posidonius makes mention of a man of Rhodes, who not long before his demise, stated the exact order in which six of his friends would successively die. When Alexander the Great, at the termination of his days, was asked, whom he appointed his successor, he replied

"the best; for I foresee that great funeral games will be celebrated for me by my friends:" and this remark is adduced by Diodorus as an example of the astonishing realisation of prophecies pronounced shortly before death. And Cicero, extending the same power of presentiment to perfectly uncivilised tribes, mentions the uneducated Indian Calanus, who, when about to burn himself, predicted the almost immediate death of the Macedonian monarch.

Similar notions, entertained by the Hebrews also, particularly recommended the insertion of a comprehensive prophecy, addressed by Jacob to his assembled children, when on the verge of his grave. It is true, that we have, in the preceding parts of Genesis, met with more than one passage where later historical facts are unmistakeably represented in the form of prophecy, a mode of writing naturally chosen with pre-dilection by epic authors of all nations; indeed the forty-eighth chapter, with its clearly defined history of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, is alone entirely sufficient to illustrate the manner in which the Pentateuch, by obvious anticipation, transfers posterior events into the lives of the patriarchs: but it will readily be conceded that the deep-rooted belief just adverted to enhances the propriety, and may have formed an additional motive, for introducing this prophetic blessing; just as, in later times, Moses, Joshua, David, and others, are related, at the approach of their death, to have blessed and exhorted the people or their children.[1]

Hence the fact, that not individuals, but the twelve tribes of Israel are here addressed, has been mistaken by few; and it is distinctly enough stated in the text.[2] Some, indeed, entirely denying that the poem is intended as a prophecy, find in it nothing but occurrences which happened in the land of Goshen or in the lives of the patriarchs; while others maintain that some of the predictions have never been realized; that especially the tribe of Levi was at no period so hopelessly scattered through the land; and that, therefore, the song dates from a time "when the clerical office of the tribe of Levi was not at all expected nor even thought of." But the first verse of the chapter clearly proves that the poem is designed as a prophecy, "I shall tell you what will befall you in later days"; and the homeless dispersion of the Levites, during many generations, can be substantiated by indisputable historical evidence.[3] Many consider a revelation of the future altogether dangerous, since it would tend to *call forth* the predicted events. But the poem discloses its character strikingly enough in several passages, where facts happening *after the conquest of Canaan*, are plainly mentioned as *past* events: "And Issachar saw the rest, that it was good, and the land, that it was pleasant; and he bent his shoulder to bear, and became a tributary servant."[4] And we are certain, no one will seriously contend that Hebrew writers never employed the form of *real prophecy*, that is, of announcement of later events; so absurd an assertion would be disclaimed and refuted by a large portion of the Old Testament.

The principal question, therefore, which now arises, is: To what period of the history of the Israelites does this portion refer? or the political condition of what age does it describe? It appears to us manifest:

1. That it does *not* apply to a time *anterior to Saul*; for it contains unequivocal allusions to the royal dignity in the words, "the sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet."[5]

2. It does *not* refer to *Saul's reign*, since the tribe of Benjamin, from which the monarch had sprung, is but very briefly and almost passingly noticed (ver. 27).

3. It cannot relate to the reigns of David and Solomon, since the tribe of Joseph is so delineated as to appear the powerful rival of Judah, and is, besides, also called "*the crowned* of his brethren."[6]

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[1] Deut. xxxii.; xxxiii.; Josh. xxiii.; 1 Ki. ii. 1—6.
[2] Vers. 16, 28.
[3] See notes on vers. 5—7.
[4] Ver. 15; comp. vers. 23, 24.
[5] Ver. 10; see notes on vers. 8—12.
[6] Ver. 26; comp. notes on vers. 22—26.

4. It can, therefore, only refer to the time of the *divided empire*, with the *earlier* period of which the whole spirit and every single trait completely agree, as we shall endeavour to prove in the following notes. It pourtrays a time, when the tribes had individually ceased to possess a prominent history, or individually to achieve memorable deeds, such as they doubtless performed at the period of the conquest and the subsequent wars; only Judah and Joseph ruling over, if not absorbing, the other clans of Israel, were then still playing active and conspicuous parts; and hence they are alone treated with greater copiousness and almost ardent interest, while the others are introduced very briefly, and in some instances obscurely and almost abruptly.

TRANSLATION.

1. And Jacob called his sons, and said, Assemble, that I may tell you what will befall you in later days. 2. Gather yourselves and listen, ye sons of Jacob; and listen to Israel your father.

3. Reuben, thou *art* my firstborn,
My strength and the firstling of my vigour,
Superiority of dignity and superiority of power:
4. Ebullition like water —
Thou shalt not be superior;
For thou didst ascend thy father's bed;
Then didst thou defile *it*: —
My couch he hath ascended.
5. Simeon and Levi are brethren;
An instrument of violence is their burning rage.
6. Into their council my soul shall not come;
In their assembly my glory shall not join:
For in their anger they slew men,
And in their self-will they hamstrung oxen.
7. Cursed *be* their anger, for *it is* fierce,
And their wrath, for it is cruel:
I will disperse them in Jacob,
And scatter them in Israel.
8. Judah, thee thy brethren shall praise;
Thy hand *is* on the neck of thy enemies;
Thy father's sons shall prostrate themselves before thee.
9. Judah is a lion's whelp;
From the prey, my son, thou ascendest:

He stoopeth down, he croucheth, like a lion,
And like a lioness; who will rouse him?
10. The sceptre shall not depart from Judah,
Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet —
Even when they come to Shiloh —
And to him *shall be* submission of nations.
11. He bindeth his foal to the vine,
And his young ass to the noble vine;
He washeth his garments in wine,
And his raiment in the blood of grapes:
12. His eyes *are* sparkling from wine,
And his teeth white from milk.
13. ZEBULUN will dwell on the coast of seas;
Indeed he *will dwell* on the coast of ships;
And his side *will extend* to Zidon.
14. ISSACHAR *is* a bony ass
Crouching between the folds:
15. And he saw the rest that *it was* good,
And the land that *it was* pleasant;
And he bent his shoulder to bear,
And became a tributary servant.
16. DAN will judge his people
As one of the tribes of Israel.
17. Dan will be a serpent by the way,
A viper in the path,
That biteth the heels of the horse,
That its rider falleth backward.—
18. For Thy help I hope, O Lord!—
19. GAD, a host will oppress him:
But he will oppress *them* on *their* heels.
20. Of ASHER the bread will be fat,
And he will furnish royal dainties.
21. NAPHTALI is a graceful hind:
He uttereth words of beauty.
22. JOSEPH is a fruitful bough,
A fruitful bough by the well:
His branches spread over the wall.
23. And the archers harassed him,

And they assembled in multitude,
And they persecuted him:
24. But his bow remained in strength;
And the arms of his hands were brisk.—
From the hands of the Mighty of Jacob,
From Him, the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel,
25. From the God of thy father who may help thee,
And from the Almighty who may bless thee,
May come upon thee blessings of heaven from above,
Blessings of the deep that spreadeth beneath,
Blessings of the breasts and of the womb.
26. The blessings of thy father prevail
Above the blessings of the eternal mountains,
Above the delight of the everlasting hills:
They may come on the head of Joseph,
And on the brow of the crowned among his brethren.
27. BENJAMIN is a wolf *that* teareth to pieces:
In the morning he devoureth prey,
And at even he rendeth spoil.

28. All these *are* the twelve tribes of Israel: and this *it is* that their father spoke to them, and blessed them; every one according to his blessing he blessed them.

COMMENTARY.

1, 2. After Jacob had expressed his will and pronounced his predictions regarding the future development of the tribe of Joseph, he assembled all his sons, in order to address similar disclosures to each of them individually. This is apparently the connection intended by the author between this and the preceding chapter; and though it may be conceded that the thread is but slight and loose, it is as certain that the general situation is in both sections perfectly identical, that the completest harmony prevails in the nature and arrangement of the facts, and that if our poem has been inserted by the author from an older source, in the manner now recognised by all critics, it occupies in every respect an appropriate place. Though Ephraim and Manasseh are not introduced as two distinct tribes, their existence is with sufficient distinctness alluded to in the words "Joseph is a fruitful bough... *his branches spread over the wall*"; on the one hand, the notice of *Joseph* as one of the sons, was indispensable in the last address of *Jacob*; but on the other hand, the division of his tribe into two would have raised the number of the tribes to *thirteen*, since Levi, as yet neither deprived of his political hopes, nor installed in his religious dignity, could here not be omitted.

I. Reuben, vers. 3, 4.

In all Biblical genealogies, from the earliest down to the latest times, the primogeniture is, without exception, attributed to Reuben.[1] It is, indeed, expressly recorded that at no stage of Hebrew history the first place was denied to him in the national rolls.[2] Yet it would be rash and illusory to conclude from this circumstance, that the tribe of Reuben was really, at some period, invested with the leadership in Israel. Such an inference is entirely overthrown by the testimony of history. As far as the existing records reach, they contain no notice whatever of a conspicuous position at any time occupied by the Reubenites. A material ascendancy was, above all, impeded, if not rendered impossible, by their geographical situation. They had settled in the east of the Jordan, apart from the principal stock of their brethren, separated from them by a great river, and by the Dead Sea still more debarred from their intercourse than Gad and Manasseh, in a territory which could be considered impure, and beyond the immediate protection of the God of Israel,[3] and which reaching in the east to the very borders of the deserted tracts of Arabia, was incessantly exposed to the rapacious invasions of lawless hordes; and though the men of Reuben occasionally repelled such attacks not without glory or success, their existence became, by continual dangers, so precarious that they were contented if their community was but preserved from complete extinction, and maintained itself as an independent tribe; in which sense the later blessing of Moses exclaims, "May Reuben live and not die, nor may his men be few."[4] Their abodes abounded, indeed, in excellent pasture land, forests, and meadows; and many became wealthy proprietors of cattle: but they were by these very blessings alienated from the spirit of war and conquest, and almost from a progressive political life. In the time of the Judges they could not, even by long discussions, be roused to abandon for a while their herds and villages, and to take part in the glorious national war immortalised by the song of Deborah.[5] The two tribes and a half which had settled in the east of the Jordan, laboured, besides, under a common disadvantage. Their habitations spread over an extent of country disproportionately large for their numbers, and hence most onerous to maintain; their cities, in many instances scattered at considerable distances from each other, could mutually afford but little aid against the Ammonites and the other hostile tribes living within the same boundaries and in the very midst of the Hebrews; and the latter were, therefore, compelled to have their folds, for better protection, within the walls of their towns which were thus necessarily enlarged, and became more difficult for defence and control. Indeed during protracted periods the people lived partially in tents, in the manner of nomads, frequently wandering from district to district, changing old abodes with new ones, and cultivating the soil but little or subordinately. Hence arose not only great uncertainty in the definition of the boundaries, but considerable fluctuations in the possession of the towns; different tribes succeeded each other in the occupation of the same regions and cities, which, on the other hand, were not unfrequently inhabited by a mixed population. How could, then, tribes without unity and almost without connection, far from the chief seats of Hebrew progress in politics, literature, and religious development, and engaged in pursuits forming nearly the lowest steps in the great ladder of civilisation, at any time acquire sway and authority over their much more advanced kinsmen?

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[1] See xxix. 32; xxxv. 23; xlvi. 8; Exod. i. 2; Num. i. 20; xxvi. 5; Deut. xxxiii. 5; etc.

[2] Comp. 1 Chr. v. 1.

[3] See p. 490.

[4] Deut. xxxiii. 6. — The numerical strength of Reuben seems originally not to have been insignificant; the tribe is recorded to have counted, at the exodus from Egypt, 46,500 men above 20 years of age, able to carry arms (Num. i. 20, 21); but to have diminished at the end of the wanderings to 43,730 (Num. xxvi. 7); while the military men of *the two and a half* eastern tribes are, in 1 Chr. v. 18, together stated at 44,760.

[5] Comp. Judg. v. 15, 16.

The conclusion, therefore, resulting from these considerations is, that Reuben was indeed the *first* of those Hebrew tribes, which, deriving their origin from the regions of the Euphrates, and for some time living in Egypt, ultimately advanced into Palestine from the east of the Jordan; but that so far from being able to turn this priority of settlement to advantage, it forfeited its authority by haughty wantonness, and still more by repulsive immorality of life and conduct, which the kindred clans regarded with disgust, and almost with execration. All this is sufficiently transparent from the tenour of the verses under discussion. Reuben is the firstling of power who might well have acquired a superior and pre-eminent position; but he did not obtain it, because he polluted the honour of the house of Israel.[1]

Thus it is clear that "the right of primogeniture," if understood to mean double or, at least, larger property, was never possessed by Reuben; and hence it is irrelevant to enquire by which tribe that privilege was inherited, after it was lost by Reuben. And is it, as a general principle, historically probable or even possible, that the privilege of "the firstborn" should have been transferred to any later or younger tribe? How should it be recognised? Was it a standing and necessarily permanent dignity? This is certainly no less improbable than the uniform distribution of the people in *twelve* tribes after an imaginary or astrological principle.[2]

However, the question, which tribes successively occupied the most decided influence among the Hebrew immigrants and conquerors, is not only of great interest, but of very high historical importance. It is commonly maintained that the chief authority was first exercised by the tribe of Joseph, on account of the exalted virtue and wisdom attributed to its founder, but that it later virtually passed over to the tribe of Judah. But though the accounts regarding the tribe of Joseph are preserved to us in considerable copiousness and completeness, they never record, nor even allow the inference, that *the south* of Palestine at any time acknowledged its superiority; here, on the contrary, the tribe of Judah exhibited, from the beginning, the energy and disposition of appropriating to itself the supremacy; not even Gideon, the powerful and much revered hero, could venture to defy the jealousy of Judah by accepting the crown which was offered to him, and in due time became hereditary in the family of Jesse. But while David and Solomon confirmed and extended the power of their house at home and abroad, the tribe of Ephraim also continued its development with zeal and steadiness, and gradually grew so much in strength and self-reliance, that despotism and imbecility on the part of Solomon's immediate successors, encouraged it to proclaim its independence and to found a separate kingdom, which was acknowledged by nine other tribes; so that thenceforth the empire of the north and Ephraim as its recognised head, with a nice balance of power, co-existed with the southern monarchy of Judah. This is the point of view occupied by our poem, which describes both Judah and Joseph as royal tribes, flourishing, happy, and victorious.

II. Simeon, vers. 5—7.

The destinies of the tribe of Simeon were, in some points, not unlike those of the Reubenites, but in other respects decidedly more melancholy. Though in the reminiscence of the nation regarded as the second of the tribes, it never succeeded, like Reuben, in acquiring for habitation large or fertile districts. It is true, that the Simeonites were from early times distinguished and renowned for daring prowess, which emboldened them to seek abodes in most dangerous regions, cautiously avoided, except for occasional invasions, by the rest of the Hebrew tribes, in those south-western parts of Palestine, adjoining Egypt, where they had perpetually to contend with powerful and merciless enemies, as the Edomites and Amalekites; and tradition attributes to them a degree of courage which at an early period enabled them, in conjunc-

[1] See xxxiv. 22; comp. Lev. xviii. 8; 2 Sam. xvi. 21, 22. [2] See on xlviii. p. 488.

tion with Levi, to conquer a town situated so far northward as Shechem (xxxiv. 25—31). But following the traces afforded by our song, we are justified in concluding, that their valour too soon degenerated into sanguinary ferocity, which prompted them to undertake wild and reckless, and often impious and rapacious, expeditions, sadly reducing their numbers and their strength, and calling down upon their name the hatred and abomination both of their antagonists and their kinsmen. The decrease of their population is indeed more striking and extraordinary than in any other tribe; for while they numbered, in the first year after the departure from Egypt, no less than 59,300 warriors, they had during the wanderings in the desert fallen to 22,200, or to nearly one third of their former strength.[3] Nor did they ever in later periods recover from their fatal losses, or increase in any proportion to the steady growth of other tribes. For their enterprising audacity was not deterred even by their numerical weakness from most hazardous schemes. Repressed to narrow and not very blooming or productive strips of land, and desirous to gain larger scope and more favourable opportunities for breeding of cattle, to which occupation they were chiefly led by their own reverses and the general history of their nation, they are recorded so late as the eighth century, in the time of king Hezekiah, to have made brilliant and successful attacks upon some southern or Hamitic tribes, and to have taken possession of their tempting and fertile districts.[4] But these emigrations far beyond the proper boundaries of the land of the Israelites, and partially extending to Mount Seir, where they expelled the rest of the Amalekites, were only in harmony with the tastes displayed by the Simeonites at much earlier stages of their existence. Too much weakened by anterior misfortunes to attempt alone the conquest of a part of Canaan, they joined the infinitely more powerful tribe of Judah, relying upon its generosity for the ultimate acquisition of adequate abodes. Their confidence was not betrayed. The men of Judah subdued districts too vast for their own occupation, and they willingly conceded to Simeon the southern tracts on the coast of the Mediterranean, which included a large portion of the territory of the Philistines. It was, therefore, at all times avowed that the Simeonites, as if they had no independent or equal claim, "obtained their inheritance in the midst of the inheritance of the men of Judah."[5] They received seventeen cities with the surrounding villages;[6] but too powerless to maintain, and too few to occupy them, they were compelled to give up some to the tribe of Judah, and to abandon others to their heathen neighbours. How could they, therefore, be expected to conquer the strong Philistine towns situated within their own boundaries? And yet such an attempt was necessary for the realization of the plans and ideas upon which the Hebrew conquest of Canaan was based. The sword of Judah performed this duty also for the fraternal tribe: however, the success was but temporary; and Gaza, Ascalon, and Ekron, though taken by Judah, could not be defended by Simeon.[7] This tribe, therefore, was imperceptibly, but long before the exile, entirely absorbed by that of Judah, with which it naturally was joined after the division of the empire; and it ceased so completely to form an independent or united community, that it could entirely be passed over in the blessing of Moses;[8]

[3] Comp. Num. i. 22, 23; xxvi. 12—14; 1 Chron. iv. 38.

[4] See 1 Chron. iv. 39—44.

[5] See Josh. xix. 1, 9; Judg. i. 3, 17; comp. Josh. xxi. 9.

[6] Josh. xix. 2—8; comp. 1 Chr. iv. 24—33.

[7] Comp. Judg. i. 18; Josh. xv. 45—47.

[8] Deut. xxxiii. Hence the empire of Judah is in some passages stated to consist of *one* tribe only, which, together with the *ten* tribes of Israel, made up the whole nation of *twelve* tribes (see 1 Ki. xi. 13, 30—32, 35, 36); since Simeon, no more counted separately, was included in Judah. But in 1 Ki. xii. 21 it is stated, that Rehoboam assembled "the whole house of Judah *and the tribe of Benjamin* to fight *against the house of Israel*"; it appears, therefore, that *parts* of Benjamin fell, after the division, to Judah, as was almost unavoidable from the geographical position of both tribes (see on ver. 27; comp. Ezr. iv. 1; x. 9); while the small tribe of Simeon

though it was not forgotten in the ideal distribution pourtrayed by the prophet Ezekiel, who, in describing the restoration of the Hebrew people in its integrity, of course introduced all the *twelve* tribes.[1] Nothing is, therefore, more in harmony with the later fate of the Simeonites than the menace pronounced upon them in our poem: "I will disperse them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel."

III. Levi, vers. 5—7.

The history of the tribe of Levi, remarkable and extraordinary in itself, is eminently calculated to open a deep insight into the internal development of the Hebrew nation. But in proportion to its interest and importance are its intricacies and perplexities; it offers contradictions which appear irreconcilable; and it is entangled in dilemmas which seem to defy every critical effort. The difficulties commence with the words attributed to the dying patriarch with reference to that tribe. We find here the Levites coupled with the Simeonites in a severe rebuke and curse, denouncing with horror their violence and oppression, and describing their dispersion through Israel as a dire calamity and well-merited chastisement. How is this to be brought into harmony with the privileged position assigned to them in the ordinances of the Pentateuch? How could it be said of the holy representatives of the people, of the Divinely chosen priests, "into their council my soul shall not come; in their assembly my glory shall not join?" And was there ever a time when the Levites were or could be regarded as labouring under so fatal a malediction? We shall follow the safe guidance of the historical statements contained in the Biblical records, and may thus be able to arrive at some satisfactory conclusion.

First it appears that the men of Levi were not at all times unwarlike or unworldly. National tradition assigns to Levi a principal share in the massacre at Shechem;[2] Benaiah, the son of the *priest* Jehoiada, was, by David, appointed one of his *generals*; and Solomon not only confirmed this appointment, and employed Benaiah for sanguinary commissions,[4] but he preferred Azariah, the son of his first priest Zadok, to a prominent office of political administration.[5] However, the men of Levi seem, like the Simeonites, in the earlier periods to have been utter strangers to moderation and self-control; so that our song could exclaim, "an instrument of violence is their burning rage; cursed be their anger, for it is fierce, and their wrath, for it is cruel." The consequences were not very different from those which attended the similar vices and crimes of the fraternal tribe. The number of the Levites fell to the small amount of 22,000, a figure lower even than that reached by the Simeonites at the second census.[6] Such a paucity of military men rendered it difficult for them to conquer a portion of Palestine for their hereditary abodes; and as they were not even, like the Simeonites, able to enlist the sympathy and co-operation of a more powerful tribe, they never acquired connected territory sufficient to hold their limited population. The analogies in the early history of the two tribes are indeed so striking and manifold, that our poem could appropriately combine the prediction concerning both in one joint address. Thus the Levites were compelled to seek shelter in any part of the country in which access was permitted to them. In small and divided groups, they settled in a large part of the cities both in the east and in the west of Jordan, both in the north and in the south; and they could, therefore, justly be represented as "dispersed in Jacob and scattered in Israel."

This is manifestly the course of events which decided the ultimate destiny of the

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is there alluded to by the words, "and the rest of the people" (*ibid.* ver. 23).

[1] Ezek. xlviii. 24, 25; comp. Rev. vii. 7.

[2] xxxiv. 25—31.

[3] 1 Chr. xxvii. 5; comp. 2 Sam. viii. 18; xx. 23; 1 Ki. ii. 35.

[4] 1 Kings ii. 25, 35.

[5] 1 Kings iv. 2, 4; comp. ii. 35.

[6] Num. iii. 39; see *supra* p. 503.

tribe of Levi; and from this point of view alone the severe terms of our song can be accounted for and may be rendered intelligible. It is of no avail to force upon the words a construction repudiated by the first rules of interpretation, and to refer them to the measures of the Pentateuch, which assigns to the Levites, throughout the country, forty-eight cities, with certain inalienable lands around them as pastures for their cattle.[7] For the Pentateuch represents that arrangement in a very different light from that in which it is viewed in our poem. It is there not regarded as a curse for merciless and unbridled atrocities: but because "the Lord hath singled out the tribe of Levi to bear the Ark of the Covenant, therefore Levi shall have no portion or inheritance with his brethren; *the Lord is his inheritance.*"[8] Thus the want of territorial property on the part of the Levites, was considered as the necessary consequence of their selection for the most precious spiritual privileges; they were not to obtain any wordly power, because they should entirely devote their lives to the service of God, who had taken them under His paternal protection, and who, in order to secure their material welfare also, repeatedly enjoined upon the other tribes, "take care not to forget the Levite all the days that you are in your land,"[9] and otherwise most amply provided for their subsistence.[10]

But this is not the only nor the greatest discrepancy. The very mission and services of the Levites, during a long period after Moses, appear very different in the historical accounts and in the statements of the Pentateuch. Let us remind the reader of the chief precepts of the Law concerning the tribe of Levi.

1. Originally the firstborn sons of all Israelites were intended to perform the priestly functions; for they belonged to God, who had miraculously delivered them at the last Egyptian plague;[11] but in order less to disturb the domestic relations of the people, and to secure greater efficiency in the sacred offices, the religious primogeniture was conferred on the tribe of Levi; so that 22,000 firstborn Israelites were replaced by as many Levites, and each of the rest[12] was redeemed by five shekels.[13]

2. The sacrifices were to be offered "before the door of the Tabernacle, before the Lord," at the place which the Lord would choose among all tribes, to let His name dwell there; and the Israelite was commanded, "take heed that thou offer not thy burnt-offerings in every place that thou seest."[14]

3. The service at the altar and within the Holy Tent was to be performed exclusively by Aaron and his descendants; every stranger who attempted to officiate, or even to approach the sacred precincts, was to be put to death.[15]

4. The descendants of Moses, or the Levites in the more restricted sense, were associated to the priests as their ministers, to do all the subordinate services at the Tabernacle; "but they should not come near the vessels of the sanctuary and the altar; lest they die together with the priests";[16] nor was an Israelite of any of the other tribes allowed to perform the Levitical offices, "that there might be no plague when the children of Israel approached the sanctuary."[17]

If we compare these laws with the facts recorded in the historical books, we are surprised by striking and remarkable contrasts.

1. The people offered sacrifices to God at Bochim, a place the sanctity of which is

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[7] Compare Lev. xxxv. 32—34; Num. xxxv. 1—8; Josh. xiv. 4; xxi. 1—40; 1 Chr. vi. 39—66.

[8] Deut. x. 8, 9; xii. 12; Num. xviii. 20; comp. Josh. xiii. 14, 33; xiv. 3, 4; xviii. 7.

[9] Deut. xii. 19; xiv. 27, 29.

[10] Comp. Num. v. 6, *et seq.*; Lev. xxv. 32—34; Num. xviii. 14; See Num. xviii. 8, *et seq.*; Deut. xii. 18; xvi. 11.

[11] Comp. Exod. xiii. 2, 13.

[12] 273 in Numbers.

[13] Num. iii. 11—13, 40—51; comp. viii. 16—18; see Com. on Exod. p. 165.

[14] Deut. xii. 11, 13, 14; Lev. i. 3; iv. 4; viii. 3, 4, etc.

[15] Num. iii. 10; xviii. 1, 7.

[16] Num. xviii. 3, 6.

[17] Num. viii. 19; iii. 10, 38; xvii. 5.

in no wise guaranteed, and where certainly the Tabernacle did not stand at that time.[1]

2. Gideon, *from the tribe of Manasseh*, brought sacrifices to God at *Ophrah*, far from the common sanctuary.[2]

3. Manoah, the father of Samson, *of the tribe of Dan*, offered sacrifices at *Zareah*, an unsanctified place.[3]

4. Micah, a man of mount Ephraim, had in his residence "a house of God, and made an ephod, and Teraphim, and consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest."[4] That image was afterwards taken away by a number of Danites, who, on their way to the northern parts of Canaan, passed through the town of Micah; "and the children of Dan set up for themselves the graven image of Micah, all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh."[5] It appears, therefore, that it was not unusual for the Israelites, down to a late period, to have private sanctuaries with a regular and permanent service. But this is in direct antagonism with the absolute unity of religious worship prescribed in the Pentateuch.

5. The people assembled at Mizpeh "to the Lord," while the holy Ark was not there.[6] The remark, that wherever the people of God met consciously as such, it "assembled to the Lord," is fallacious and untenable, and scarcely worthy of consideration; for if so, the Hebrews would have required no holy place of meeting and no Tabernacle at all.

6. When the Ark of the Covenant came to *Beth-shemesh*, the people "offered burnt-offerings and sacrificed sacrifices to the Lord."[7]

7. Most important for our purpose is the history of Samuel. According to the genealogy of the first book of Chronicles, this great man belonged to the tribe of Levi, descending from Kohath, *but not from the line of Aaron.*[8] As he was, therefore, no *priest*, he ought, according to the precept of the Pentateuch above quoted,[9] under penalty of death, to have abstained from all those higher functions exclusively reserved for the progeny of Aaron. But do our records allow of such a conclusion? When the man of God announced to Eli the rejection of his family from its sacred offices, he alluded to Samuel in the following terms, "I will raise up for me a faithful priest, and I will build him a sure house, and he shall walk before my anointed for ever."[10] And accordingly we find Samuel not only described as a prophet,[11] or acting as Judge, making annually a circuit through the principal towns of Israel, such as Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpeh;[12] but we see him in every respect officiating as a true priest, or as a member of Aaron's family. When the Philistines threatened the Israelites then assembled at Mizpeh, with a fierce attack, "Samuel took a sucking lamb, and offered it for a burnt-offering wholly to the Lord."[13] At Ramah, his usual abode, where he ordinarily judged the people, "he built an altar to the Lord."[14] The people brought at fixed periods offerings "on a high place," but they did not eat until Samuel "had blessed the sacrifice."[15] When he went to Bethlehem to anoint David instead of Saul, he took a heifer with him, and said to the family of Jesse, "I am come to sacrifice to the Lord: sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice"; upon which "he sanctified Jesse and his sons, and called them to the sacrifice."[16] Who requires more incontrovertible proofs of the thoroughly priestly offices discharged by the Levite Samuel? And yet, in the Pentateuch, Korah, though likewise a Levite, and likewise

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[1] Judg. ii. 5. [2] Judg. vi. 11—20.
[3] Judg. xiii. 19, 20. [4] Judg. xvii. 5.
[5] Judg. xviii. 3, 27, 30, 31.
[6] 1 Sam. vii. 1, 5; x. 17.
[7] 1 Sam. vi. 15.
[8] 1 Chr. vi. 12, 13, 18, 19.
[9] Num. xviii. 3, 6.
[10] 1 Sam. ii. 35; comp. ver. 28.
[11] 1 Sam. iii. 20; ix. 6—14; x. 5—13; xix. 20—24.
[12] 1 Sam. vii. 6, 15—17.
[13] *Ibid.* vii. 9, 10. [14] *Ibid.* ver. 17.
[15] *Ibid.* ix. 12, 13. [16] *Ibid.* xvi. 2, 5.

from the family of Kohath, was punished with a fearful death because he coveted a dignity completely appropriated by another branch of his tribe.[17]

8. During a long period after Moses, down to the end of the time of the Judges, the position of the Levites was very dissimilar to that provided for them in the Pentateuch. Instead of conveniently living in the Levitical towns, supported partly by the gifts of the Israelites, and partly by the lands which formed a certain basis for their subsistence, they wandered through the length and breadth of the land, homeless and breadless; they were happy to be maintained by the benevolence of pious individuals; and were by no means scrupulous whether the towns in which they settled were holy or not.[18]

9. After the Ark of the Covenant had left Shiloh, in the time of Eli, it remained for a long period in Kirjath-jearim, where, during the whole of Saul's reign, it remained without priests, sacrifices, or sacred worship, neglected and abandoned in the house of a private Israelite. Why did the Levites suffer this profanation? Why did they bestow no care or attention on the most sacred part of the Tabernacle, which, without it, was deprived of its very life and centre.[19]

10. The people celebrated the election of Saul as king at Gilgal by "sacrificing burnt-offerings and peace-offerings before the Lord," although the holy Ark was not then at Gilgal.[20]

11. Nor did the irregularities of the religious service cease in the earlier epochs of the Hebrew monarchy. When Samuel did not arrive at the appointed time in Gilgal, Saul, though a Benjamite, anxious to march against the enemy, offered the sacrifices for the assembled army; and the displeasure of Samuel at this step was attributable to perfectly personal and political, not religious, motives; since Samuel himself, the Levite, was not justified in presiding at the sacrifice.[21]

12. When the people had sinned by eating meat together with its blood, Saul, in order to expiate the transgression, built an altar, and commanded that every man should offer up his ox or his lamb; which is indisputably against the spirit of the Mosaic injunctions.[22]

13. David left the Ark of the Covenant for three months in the house of Obed-Edom, in Gath, because he believed its presence to be dangerous, and brought it to Jerusalem only when he learnt the abundant blessing experienced by Obed-Edom.[23]

14. On this occasion, David, though of the tribe of Judah, arrayed in the "linen ephod," the characteristic garment of the priests, "offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings before the Lord, and blessed the people in the name of the Lord of hosts";[24] though he had around him the priests Zadok and Abiathar, through whom he was accustomed to consult the Divine oracle.[25]

15. At the time of the pestilence, David built an altar on the threshing-floor of Araunah, offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, and the plague ceased.[26]

16. "The sons of David were priests."[27] Instead of this notice, indeed, the Book of Chronicles, quite in harmony with its usual Levitical tendency, writes: "the sons of David were the first about the person of the king."[28]

17. Adoniah, the son of David, offered sacrifices at the meeting of his friends, assembled by him for the purpose of securing their assistance in his attempt to deprive Solomon of the throne.[29]

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[17] Num. xvi. 1, 8—10; xvii. 5; compare iv. 15; xviii. 2, 3.

[18] See Judg. xvii. 7—12; xviii. 1—31; xix. 1; 1 Sam. xxi. 1—6; comp. ii. 36.

[19] 1 Sam. vii. 2; 1 Chron. xiii. 3.

[20] 1 Sam. xi. 15; comp. vii. 1; 2 Sam. vi. 3, 4; and Judg. xx. 26, 27.

[21] 1 Sam. xiii. 9, *et seq.*

[22] 1 Sam. xiv. 32—35.

[23] 2 Sam. vi. 9—12.

[24] 2 Sam. vi. 14, 17, 18; comp. Deut. xxi. 5; Ps. cx. 4.

[25] 1 Sam. xxiii. 9; xxx. 7.

[26] 2 Sam. xxiv. 25.

[27] 2 Sam. viii. 18.

[28] 1 Chron. xviii. 17.

[29] 1 Kings i. 9.

18. It has been mentioned above, that the priests Beniah and Azariah filled military and secular offices (see p. 504).

19. Before the building of the Temple, not only Solomon, but any Israelite who chose, sacrificed on the heights, on one of which, at Gibeon, which was "the great height," the king offered a thousand burnt-offerings on an altar.[1] The Book of Chronicles adds, as a justification of this latter act, "for there was the Tent of Meeting of God, which Moses the servant of the Lord had made in the desert":[2] but even, if this was the case, the sacrifices must be regarded as illegitimate, since the Ark was at that time in Jerusalem; the worship of Solomon at Gibeon is, in the Book of Kings, introduced with the censure, "only he sacrificed and burnt incense in high places":[3] and after having obtained a Divine vision, the king went to Jerusalem, stood before the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord,[4] and offered up burnt-offerings, and made peace-offerings.

20. At the consecration of the Temple, Solomon sacrificed together with the people;[5] he blessed the latter;[6] kneeling before the altar of the Lord, and his hands raised to heaven, he pronounced a fervent supplication for the prosperity of Israel, asked for the gracious fulfilment of every prayer, for forgiveness of all sins, for blessing in peace and success in war,[7] and concluded with another ardent benediction on the people of Israel.[8] In fine, Solomon himself consecrated the holy edifice; except that the Ark was placed into the Holy of Holies by the priests, who, however, are mentioned at no other part of the ceremonies.[9]

21. And those who do not think all these combined statements conclusive, and perhaps regard many of them as exceptional or isolated, may consider the notice that Solomon, even after the inauguration of the Temple, regularly, "three times every year, offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings upon the altar which he had built to the Lord, and he burnt incense upon the altar that was before the Lord."[10]

The obvious results to be drawn from these facts are, that during a long period after the conquest of Canaan, the Israelites extensively preserved the patriarchal organisation of their households; that the head of the family, at regular intervals, performed the sacerdotal functions in the name of the other members;[11] that, in general, the priestly power remained combined with the secular authority, so that among the Hebrews, as was the case among all ancient nations, kings, military leaders, or other public dignitaries, offered sacrifices for the people, and discharged other religious offices; that these rites were performed at any place where an occasion arose, and not exclusively at the Tabernacle; that the Levites, weakened and humbled in consequence of political misfortunes and reckless warfare, were far from possessing any special claim to the priesthood, could still less obtain or exercise great hierarchical power, and appear almost everywhere in a condition of dependence, and sometimes of helplessness. If the reader, from these considerations, turns once more to the words of our poem applying to Levi, he will understand their full force and propriety.

However, it is, on the other hand, undeniable, that the Levites showed, from a remote period, *a tendency* to occupy the position marked out for them in the Pentateuch, and that the principal religious institutions there delineated are, with more or less distinctness, traceable in the history of the Hebrews after Moses. In harmony with the notice in the Book of Joshua, that "the whole congregation assembled at Shiloh, and there set up the Tabernacle of Meeting,"[12] we find during a large part of the period

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[1] 1 Kings iii. 2—4.
[2] 2 Chr. i. 3, 13; comp. 1 Chr. xvi. 39; xxi. 29.
[3] 1 Kings iii. 3.
[4] *Ibid.* ver. 15.
[5] 1 Kings viii. 5, 62, 63.
[6] *Ib.* vers. 14—21.
[7] *Ib.* vers. 22—53.
[8] 1 Kings viii. 54—61.
[9] *Ibid.* vers. 6—11.
[10] *Ibid.* ix. 25; compare xii. 31; xiii. 33.
[11] 1 Sam. xx. 6; comp. Job i. 5; xlii. 8.
[12] Josh. xviii. 1.

of the Judges,[13] a true sanctuary and a real religious centre at Shiloh. It is designated with the distinct names *House of God*, *Abode of the Lord*, and *Tent of Meeting*.[14] It contained the Ark of the Covenant,[15] which symbolised the presence of God,[16] and bore the mysterious figures of the Cherubim;[17] which was regarded as Israel's most precious treasure, or their "honour,"[18] and accompanied the armies on military expeditions, for their own most powerful protection, and to the consternation of their enemies.[19] At Shiloh was "the light of God,"[20] burning from evening to morning;[21] here the people "appeared before the Lord,"[22] offered up and redeemed vows, killed sacrifices on a holy altar, and consumed the meals of the eucharistic offerings in the society of their families.[23] Shiloh was the place of popular assembly for deliberation on national affairs; there met the delegates of the tribes; and there were sometimes the head-quarters of the army.[24] The prophet Nathan said to David, in the name of God, "I have not dwelt in any house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a Tent and in a Tabernacle";[25] which words confirm the existence of a national place of worship after the time of Moses; and the prophet Jeremiah also mentions Shiloh as the religious centre before the erection of the Temple on Zion, and calls it the place where "God made His name dwell at first."[26]— But all these points do not prove the *unity* of the sanctuary; they show merely that solemn or religious actions were *frequently*, perhaps even *chiefly*, performed at Shiloh, or at the place where the Ark happened to be: that this was not *exclusively* the case, as would be required by the commandments of the Pentateuch, is abundantly clear from the many deviations and exceptions which have been above pointed out.

Quite analogous is the case with the Levites. We find them at all times after Moses employed for religious offices, often honoured with great confidence, and sometimes consulted on difficult questions; they carried the Ark, and their services for sacred functions were taken with predilection; so that, for instance, Micah, after having obtained a Levite to superintend his domestic worship, exclaimed with joyful satisfaction: "Now I know that the Lord will do me good, since I have a Levite to be my priest."[27] The authority of the Levites grew considerably from the time of Samuel: among the servants of Saul, no Hebrew was found who would lay hands on the priests of Nob; Doeg the Edomite alone showed himself ready to perform the impious deed;[28] though Saul himself had so little respect for the class, that he committed at Nob, the town of the priests, a general massacre of men and beasts.[29] Solomon was reluctant to kill the priest Ebiathar, who had joined the usurper Adoniah, "because he had borne the Ark of the Lord"; yet he deposed him from his priestly office, and expelled him from the capital.[30] The same monarch, though himself consecrating the Temple and blessing the people, ordered the Ark and the other holy vessels to be brought into the sacred edifice by priests and Levites;[31] priests were not

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[13] Judg. xviii. 31.

[14] 1 Sam. i. 7, 24; Judg. xviii. 31; 1 Sam. i. 9; iii. 3; ii. 22.

[15] 1 Sam. iv. 3, etc.

[16] *Ibid.* iv. 3, 7, 8; vi. 19.

[17] *Ibid.* iv. 4; 2 Sam. vi. 2.

[18] 1 Sam. iv. 18, 21, 22; comp. Psalm lxxviii. 60, 61.

[19] 1 Sam. iv. 3; comp. Num. x. 35. The Ark was, however, temporarily also at Bethel (Judg. xx. 26, 27; xxi. 2, 4), and at other places, as in Gibeon; comp. 1 Chr. xvi. 39; xxi. 29; 2 Chr. i. 3; comp. 1 Ki. iii. 4.

[20] 1 Sam. iii. 3.

[21] See on Exod. xxvii. 20, 21; compare Lev. xxiv. 2—4.

[22] 1 Sam. i. 22; comp. Deut. xvi. 16.

[23] 1 Sam. i. 3, 4, 21; ii. 33; xiv. 3, etc.; comp. Deut. xii. 17, 18.

[24] Comp. ver. 10; Josh. xxi. 2; Judg. xviii. 31; xxi. 12, 19.

[25] 2 Sam. vii. 6.

[26] Jer. vii. 12; comp. xxvi. 6.

[27] Judg. xvii. 13; see xx. 28; 1 Sam. i. 9; vi. 5; vii. 1; xiv. 3; 2 Sam. xv. 24; 1 Kings viii. 3, 4, 6; comp. Josh. iii. 3; viii. 33; see also Num. xxvii. 19; xxxii. 2; Deut. xxvii. 9; Josh. xvii. 4; Jer. xviii. 18.

[28] 1 Sam. xxii. 18.

[29] *Ibid.* ver. 19.

[30] 1 Kings ii. 26, 27.

[31] 1 Kings viii, 3, 4, 6—11.

seldom the mediators between the king and the people, and the councillors of the crown;[1] and not long afterwards we find the men of the tribe of Levi as the legal and exclusive servants of the Temple.[2] Then they steadily advanced towards obtaining that prominent position accorded to them in the Pentateuch, which, for instance, appoints them the judges in all difficult cases, and enjoins the punishment of death upon every disregard shown for their decisions;[3] for "the priests, the sons of Levi, the Lord hath chosen to minister to Him, and to bless in the name of the Lord, and by their word shall every controversy and every offence be tried";[4] till their condition entirely corresponded with the enthusiastic praise bestowed upon them in the blessing of Moses: "They shall teach Jacob Thy judgments, and Israel Thy law; they shall put incense before Thee, and whole burnt sacrifice upon Thy altar"; they became ultimately the regular and appointed instructors of the people in the precepts of Mosaism; and the respect entertained for them deepened into veneration and spontaneous submission.[6]

Hence we may thus briefly sketch the progress of the tribe of Levi. The first solid foundation for its future distinction was laid by the noble character and brilliant genius of Moses. One of the chief objects of his attention was the regulation of the religious affairs of his people. This task was peculiarly arduous at a time when the Hebrews had largely imbibed the idolatrous notions of the pagans, and were with difficulty restrained from superstitious worship. But it appears that Moses was in his plans vigorously supported by the members of his tribe.[7] The memory of this laudable co-operation is preserved in the narrative of the zeal with which, after the worship of the golden-calf, the Levites seized the sword to punish the offenders, and to vindicate the glory of the only God of Israel, when, subduing their dearest human feelings, they slew "every man his son, and every man his brother."[8] Some such act was considered as their initiation in the sacred covenant with God, and as a claim to His peculiar blessing; and the song of Moses alludes to it with unmistakable terms: "Levi said to his father and to his mother, I have not seen him; he did not acknowledge his own brothers, nor know his own children; for they have observed the word of God, and kept His covenant."[9] When, therefore, the men of Levi, after the immigration into Canaan, failed to secure territorial property, because the warlike part of the tribe hazarded wild and suicidal expeditions resulting in all but total destruction, the remaining more peaceful part followed, with enhanced energy, in the path traced out by their great model, their leader and legislator. Compelled to seek a scanty subsistence in all parts of the country, they availed themselves of their dispersion for obtaining a legitimate influence in religious matters. And it may be easily imagined, that many Israelites, and more especially the chiefs of the families, absorbed as they were by their agricultural and domestic pursuits, and not unfrequently engaged in protracted wars, gladly entrusted the management of their sacrifices and other sacred duties to men who had exhibited sincerity and eagerness in upholding the purity of faith, and who, without property and worldly cares, seemed anxious to extend and to strengthen the religious institutions. *Thus the Levites were gradually substituted for the firstborn sons,* with respect to the priestly functions originally devolving upon the latter.[10] But the Levites did not obtain these valuable prerogatives without serious opposition. In the first place, they were not free from jealousy within their own tribe. The elder branches of them, the Aaronites, had reserved for themselves the performance of all higher rites, especially at the common national sanctuary, the interior of which they claimed as their exclusive sphere of action; while they admitted the other lines of the

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[1] 2 Sam. xix. 12; 1 Ki. i. 7, 39; iv. 4.
[2] Comp. Joel i. 9, 13, 16; ii. 14, 17, etc.
[3] Deut. xvii. 8—13.
[4] Deut. xxi. 5; comp. 1 Chr. xxiii. 4.
[5] Deut. xxxiii. 10; comp. 2 Chr. xix. 11.
[6] 2 Chr. xvii. 7—9; Mal. ii. 37.
[7] Comp. 1 Sam. ii. 28.
[8] Exod. xxxii. 26—29.
[9] Deut. xxxiii. 9.
[10] Exod. xiii. 2, 13; see *supra*, p. 505.

house of Levi to the inferior offices only, and regarded them as their subordinate servants.[11] The dissatisfaction of the latter is reflected in the rebellion of Korah, who demanded equal privileges with the most favoured of his kinsmen;[12] though even Samuel, who was no Aaronite, without obstacle or censure, entirely acted in the capacity of *priest*. But further, the increasing spiritual power of the Levites naturally roused, in a still higher degree, the animosity of many Israelites, who were unwilling altogether to renounce a most essential part of their dignity and authority; and that adverse feeling was, of course, strongest in the *firstborn* tribe of Reuben, which, if any part of the people was to be singled out for the priesthood of the nation, was pre-eminently entitled to such distinction; whence we find, in the history of Korah, besides the two hundred and fifty Israelites who embraced his plans, "princes of the congregation, men of fame and renown," three Reubenites, Dathan, Abiram, and On, expressly named as the chiefs and instigators of the sedition.[13]—The growing influence of the Levites was further materially retarded, if not checked, from another side, namely, by the activity of the *prophets*. This circumstance was most fortunate for the Hebrew commonwealth, and ultimately proved no less beneficial for the stability of the Levitical institutions. The tendency to an oppressive spiritual supremacy, which seems inseparable from a permanent and hereditary priesthood, was during a long period successfully counteracted by those free and enlightened teachers, who insisted upon piety of the heart rather than rigid ceremonies, who incessantly diffused fresh and fruitful ideas, and thus happily obviated a stagnation of religious life invariably resulting from a prematurely fixed final standard of religious thought. The prophets, drawing their lessons from the eternal sources of the mind, fettered by no conventional form, and eager to spread that truth and virtue which are the common ends of all mankind, constantly corrected, enlarged, and refined, the current notions, till the latter assumed that degree of purity which recommended them as an excellent basis of national faith, and took a hold on the people strong enough to spiritualise and to render innoxious even a complicated system of rituals. Hence it may be accounted for, that the priesthood attained its greatest development only when the prophetic element of the nation fell into dissolution and decay; that a degeneracy of priests and prophets was usually simultaneous, and was in both deplored as an equal calamity for the nation;[14] that for a long time the former listened to the authority of the latter, and, to avoid conflicts, adopted their advice and warning; but that at last the priests, not unfrequently supported by the strong arm of the kings, felt assurance and power enough obstinately to oppose their will to that of the prophets, and if arguments failed, to have recourse to material force and persecution.[15] Thus the blessing of Moses, addressed to Levi, could conclude with the menacing and confident words, "Smite the loins of those who rise against him, and of those who hate him, that they may rise no more."[16]

IV. Judah, vers. 8—12.

After describing the deplorable and certainly insignificant political condition of the eldest tribes, the poem proceeds to delineate with glowing colours, and with fervid enthusiasm, the eminence, the glory, and brilliant prosperity of Judah, manifest by a slight glance at its history.

From very remote times the men of Judah exercised a certain preponderance in the Hebrew nation. On the wanderings through the desert, after the exodus from Egypt,

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[11] Num. xviii. 2.
[12] Num. xvi. 1, *et seq.*
[13] Num. xvi. 2.
[14] Mic. iii. 11; Jer. v. 31; vi. 13; xxiii. 11; Lament. iv. 13; Ez. xxii. 6; Zeph. iii. 4.
[15] Comp. Jer. xx.; xxvi. 7, *et seq.*, etc.
[16] Deut. xxxiii. 11.

they marched before all the other tribes.[1] They long owed this authority to their acknowledged power as a community, rather than to the prominent distinction of individual members; the earliest chiefs were not chosen from their ranks; they unmurmuringly recognised the leadership of the Levite Moses, the Ephraimite Joshua, and the Benjamite Saul; yet in difficult or national schemes, the initiative was willingly entrusted to their hands; and each successive undertaking fortified their own strength and the reliance of the Hebrews in their singleness of purpose and unwavering energy. At the conquest of Canaan, they were the first to secure property and to expel or subdue the heathens; and on that occasion they achieved memorable feats of heroism faithfully preserved in the records of the nation.[2] With an honourable disinterestedness, they assisted the weaker tribes in their wars for the acquisition of territory. When Benjamin had provoked the vengeance of the brother tribes, they were appointed as the first to march out in the federal army.[3] From them sprung Othniel, the *first* Judge of Israel,[4] who obtained glorious victories over the distant and mighty nations of Mesopotamia; and the circumstance that they gave, perhaps, no other Judge to the people, may justly be adduced as a proof of their advancing power, since Judges arose only when external dangers or internal confusion was to be averted by a strong administration, such as was ordinarily enjoyed by Judah. From a kindred reason, this tribe is scarcely mentioned in the subsequent periods of the Judges; it is passed over in the song of Deborah, certainly not because it was too unimportant, but because it had then already assumed an independent position in reference to the other tribes, and could rely upon its own power for safety and progress. With its habitual moderation, it subordinated itself to the young and small tribe of Benjamin, when the people, anxious for monarchical government, had accepted Saul as the first king. But when the latter showed his incapacity for a firm and beneficent rule, the tribe of Judah did not hesitate to come forward and to claim the prerogative due to it by its healthful and vigorous condition, and ultimately accorded to it after a long and determined warfare with its rivals. David was, at last, proclaimed king over all Israel,[5] and his reign heralded the most brilliant epoch in the history of the Hebrews; he made their name respected over a large part of Asia; he inspired them with a wholesome self-respect, which expanded their energies and raised their aims and hopes; he enlarged the boundaries of the realm, and knew how to defend them; he brought the surrounding nations, so long a scourge and a terror to Canaan, under his sceptre;[6] he founded a commonwealth, which could proudly take rank among the great empires of the East; and he laid a strong political basis for the growth of those truths and ideas which secured to the Israelites an imperishable monument in history, and made them the instructors of the human race. The work commenced by David was worthily continued by his gifted son. Solomon added splendour to the solidity of the preceding reign; he knew how to apply the treasures, accumulated by his father, and how to acquire even greater wealth by the enterprises of navigation and commerce; he created a lasting centre of religious worship by building a magnificent temple, round which a large part of the piety, learning, and intelligence of the nation gradually rallied, and which proved a safeguard against a permanent relapse into ignorance and superstition; he encouraged literature, and was himself one of its most successful cultivators; he gave, in a word, an effectual impulse to all the arts that adorn, and the intellectual pursuits which refine the mind. At no time of their existence could the Hebrews look with greater satisfaction upon the affairs of their country than in the middle of Solomon's reign, when peace prevailed at home and abroad, powerful kings courted their alliance, the national resources were flourishing and vastly increasing, when agriculture obtained its due

[1] Num. ii. 3; x. 14.
[2] Judg. i. 1—20.
[3] Judg. xx. 18.
[4] Judg. iii. 9, 10.
[5] 2 Sam. v. 1—5.
[6] Comp. 2 Sam. viii. 1—14.

share of attention, and the graces of civilization spread a charm of beauty over public and social life. To this time refers the chief portion of the words which in our poem are addressed to Judah. His royal dignity; the willing submission of the other tribes, rejoicing in his glory, because it partially redounds on themselves; the complete prostration of heathen nations; the tranquillity and peace with which, like an unapproachable lion, he enjoys the fruit of his victories;[7] the abundance of the most precious produce of the soil,[8] and of other property:[9] all this is so clearly and forcibly expressed in the blessing that it scarcely requires further elucidation.

But several weighty circumstances rendered it impossible that Judah should retain the undisputed dominion for a considerable period. Simultaneously with Judah, the tribe of Ephraim had steadily grown in authority and organisation, by a series of events which we have before attempted to trace (see pp. 487—493). It was hence but natural that the Ephraimites, always aspiring and conscious of their importance, should eagerly avail themselves of the least weakness or mistake on the part of Judah, to vindicate their independence, and to undermine the power of their rival. When, therefore, the latter half of Solomon's reign exhibited symptoms of decline, and when the accession of the following king, Rehoboam, was accompanied with acts devoid of all wisdom and discretion; Ephraim proclaimed its own sovereignty, which was readily acknowledged by nine other tribes. The question, which of the two kingdoms would gain the predominance, might for some time have appeared seriously doubtful. In territorial extent,[10] in numerical strength, and in the possession of cities of ancient sacredness, such as Shiloh, Gilgal, and Bethel, Ephraim was decidedly superior to Judah; and the ambition of the new dynasty left no doubt that it would fully avail itself of such important advantages. On the other hand, the kingdom of Judah enjoyed a concentration and unity which proved mighty bulwarks of strength; its citizens had inherited the manly sense of independence which had always distinguished their forefathers; they had in their midst the Temple, which, by keeping alive their religious feelings, steeled their moral courage, and beneficially influenced their life and conduct; and they were, by two long and successful reigns, fully accustomed to the rights and duties of monarchical government. When, therefore, by the co-operation of the prophet Ahijah, and most probably by a public proclamation at Shiloh, his native town and for centuries the place of general or national assemblies,[11] the division was accomplished, and the power of both kingdoms appeared so equally balanced that the subjection of one of them by the other could only be realised by a desperate and destructive war; the moderate and prudent men of Israel reasonably wished that both realms should recognise and respect each other, and, without mutual envy, pursue their own growth and advancement. This is the point of view from which our address is to be understood: *The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, even if many flock to Shiloh, and join the crown of Joseph.*[12] In this sense we interpret those words, which from the earliest times have been a subject of the most vehement dispute, and which have called forth an incredible variety of expositions. The spirit of our passage may therefore be best illustrated by the following words, which, in the First Book of Kings, the prophet Ahijah addresses to Jeroboam: "To his [David's] son will I give one tribe, *that David My servant may have a light always before Me in Jerusalem*, the city which I have chosen for Me, to let My name dwell there. And I will take thee, and thou shalt reign according to all that thy soul desireth, and shalt be king over Israel. . . . *And I will for this afflict the seed of David, but not for ever.*"[13] In fact, Judah

[7] Comp. 1 Ki. v. 5.
[8] Comp. Num. xiii. 23, 24; Joel i. 7, *et seq.*; Cant. i. 14.
[9] Comp. 1 Sam. xxv. 2; Am. i. 1; 2 Chron. xxvi. 10.
[10] Comp. Josh. xv. and p. 487.
[11] See p. 509; comp. 1 Ki. xiv. 2, *et seq.*
[12] Comp. vers. 10 and 26.
[13] 1 Ki. xi. 36—39.

and Joseph are in our song treated almost alike; both possess royal power;[1] both are lords over fraternal tribes;[2] both conquerors living in security after obstinate and difficult struggles;[3] and both are blessed with the bounty of nature and of a fertile soil.[4] These coincidences will appear the more significant if compared with the corresponding parts of the benediction of Moses. While there a fervent supplication is offered up for Judah, that he may be rescued from his powerful and numerous enemies,[5] Joseph is deprived of none of the great benefits bestowed upon him in the song of Jacob, and receives, in addition, an even more emphatic promise of agricultural fertility, and of the growing supremacy of Ephraim.[6] The picture in Genesis leads to the beginning of the divided empire, when both kingdoms were in a certain equilibrium, which principally caused and perpetuated the separation; while the description in Deuteronomy points to later trials and troubles, not unfrequent in the kingdom of Judah, when it was menaced, attacked, and severely oppressed by foreign enemies, and counted among its most dangerous antagonists *the kingdom of Ephraim itself*.[7] It cannot, however, surprise us, that Judah is, in our poem, *more explicitly* characterised as the royal tribe;[8] the heroic greatness of David, and the far-famed wisdom of Solomon, had endeared the name of Judah to every Hebrew; their successors were, in the eyes of many, who deplored the division as an inevitable source of misery, feud, and weakness, alone entitled to the right of government; and the ultimate re-union of Judah and Ephraim belonged to the most fervent hopes of the patriots. The lesser degree of prominence given to the royal dignity of Joseph may be further accounted for by the shortness of time which had elapsed since the division: at that period the dynasty of Judah could be considered as old and long-established, was surrounded by the halo of existence during a number of generations, and, in public opinion, easily maintained the moral prevalence over the monarchy of the Ten Tribes, young, unconsolidated, and but loosely connected.

V. Zebulun, ver. 13.

All the following tribes, with the only exception of Joseph, are but briefly treated, on account of their subordinate importance and interest. Zebulun, the sixth son of Jacob and Leah, is here introduced before his elder brother, Issachar, because he occupied a political superiority, willingly acknowledged by the latter,[9] and so considerably increasing in the course of time, that, in the blessing of Moses, the benediction conjointly pronounced upon both tribes, seems addressed to Zebulun alone.[10] In fact, this tribe was remarkable for the variety of talents it developed, and the diversity of pursuits it cultivated. It was warlike and brave; took part in the national struggles of the Hebrews, generally fighting under the same banner with the men of Naphtali, its northern neighbours;[11] and was therefore, in the song of Deborah, adverted to with the glorious praise: "Zebulun is a people delivering up his soul to death in the heights of the field."[12] On the other hand, it extensively engaged in commercial enterprises, venturing on distant sea trade, and greatly enlarging its revenues and connections;[13] the chief articles of their commerce seem to have been the costly purple-dyes prepared from the juice of the shell-fish,[14] a source of wealth ascribed to Zebulun by later tradition also; besides which, they may have applied themselves to the manufacture and exportation of glass. Their maritime expeditions compelled them,

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[1] Vers. 10, 26.
[2] Vers. 8, 26.
[3] Vers. 8, 9, 23, 24.
[4] Vers. 11, 12, 25, 26.
[5] Deut. xxxiii. 7.
[6] *Ibid.* vers. 13—17.
[7] Comp. Isai. vii., viii.; 2 Ki. xvi. 1—5.
[8] Vers. 8, 10.
[9] Comp. xxx. 18—20; xxxv. 23; xlvi. 13, 14.
[10] Deut. xxxiii. 18.
[11] Judg. iv. 6, 10; vi. 35.
[12] Judg. v. 18; comp. 2 Chron. xii. 33.
[13] Comp. Deut. xxxiii. 18.
[14] Compare Deut. xxxiii. 19; see Com. on Exod., pp. 373, 374.

further, to study the arts and sciences indispensable for successful navigation; they thus at an early period acquired the reputation of literary accomplishment; and the poet sang of them, "from Zebulun are the men who handle the pen of the scribe."[15] However, both their commerce and their science brought them into a connection with the Phœnicians, which, in spite of many advantages, was for a long time not without injurious and deplorable effects upon the religious notions of the Hebrews, who, principally through the medium of Zebulun, seem to have become familiar with the sensual and demoralising rites of Phœnician idolatry.[16] Yet the continued attention which many paid to spiritual and religious matters, gradually led them to the perception of truth, and made them so zealous for its diffusion, that they invited heathens to visit the Temple,[17] and thus contributed to impress foreign nations with respect for the Hebrew religion.—The geographical position of Zebulun was peculiarly favourable, and in a great measure gave rise, to the mode of life embraced by that tribe. It occupied parts in the north-eastern districts of Palestine, between Asher and Naphtali in the north, and Issachar in the south,[18] extending in the east to the sea of Tiberias,[19] and in the west to Mount Carmel and the Mediterranean,[20] or to the borders of Phœnicia, which land is here, as in other instances,[21] represented by Zidon. The author could, therefore, justly say, "Zebulun shall dwell on the coast of seas; indeed he shall dwell on the coast of ships"; and the meaning of the words, "and his side shall reach to Zidon," will be easily understood. As thus the tribe displayed energetic activity in more than one direction, it enjoyed great and undisturbed prosperity; its population was numerous and increasing;[22] and though unable to expel all the Canaanites from the boundaries of its territory,[23] it possessed authority enough to give Israel a judge in the person of Elon,[24] and at all times maintained its independence as a community.[25]

VI. Issachar, vers. 14, 15.

The men of Issachar seem originally to have been among the most valiant of Israel; if Deborah was not descended from their tribe, she could, at least, in a time of general political indifference, most safely rely upon its ready assistance and cheerful interest; she could designate it "the support" of the leader Barak, not insignificant in numbers;[26] and could call it her own army.[27] In its territory the chief battle was fought against Sisera, at Taanach, by the waters of Megiddo.[28] Such courage could not fail to secure to the people of Issachar most desirable abodes. Bounded in the north by Zebulun, and partly by Asher, and in the south by Manasseh; extending in the east to the Jordan, opposite the land of Gad,[29] and in the west to the maritime tract belonging to Manasseh:[30] their country, though mountainous in the eastern and southern districts, was, in the central parts, distinguished by the most blooming and most fertile plains, among which those of Jezreel, Esdraelon, and Megiddo, were famous and almost proverbial for beauty and excellence.[31] The acquisition of so tempting a territory determined the future development of the tribe. The choice pastures invited to the breeding of cattle; so that Issachar could be described as "crouching between the

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[15] Judg. v. 14.
[16] Comp. Judg. x. 6.
[17] Deut. xxxiii. 19.
[18] Josh. xix. 27, 34; comp. vers. 10—16.
[19] Comp. Matt. iv. 13.
[20] Comp. Josh. xix. 11.
[21] Comp. x. 15, p. 184.
[22] It counted at the two censuses recorded in the book of Numbers, 57,400 and 60,500 military men respectively; Num. i. 30, xxvi. 27.
[23] Judg. i. 30.
[24] *Ib.* xii. 11.
[25] Num. i. 9; vii. 24; x. 16; Ps. lxviii. 28.
[26] Comp. Num. i. 29 and xxvi. 25, where the sum of the men fit for military service is stated at 54,400 and 64,300.
[27] Judg. v. 15.
[28] *Ibid.* ver. 19.
[29] Josh. xix. 22.
[30] Comp. Josh. xix. 17—23.
[31] Comp. *Joseph.* Bell. Jud. III. iii. 2.

folds," or "rejoicing in his tents."[1] The whole aim and current of life were now altered. Careless of military fame, the men of Issachar permitted the tribe of Manasseh to possess cities within their limits.[2] Intent upon the accumulation of property, they soon became so solidly strong in their internal relations, that they could be compared with a "bony ass." But they were men of prudence and wise calculation. Having, therefore, gathered abundant wealth, and resolved to enjoy it, they pursued a domestic and foreign policy calculated to realise this end. Their shrewdness not only enabled them safely to keep aloof from all external dangers, and as our blessing observes, peacefully to yield themselves to secure tranquillity, but to win the esteem and deference of the fraternal tribes by useful and valuable councils; they were reputed to possess "a wise insight into the political aspect of the times"; were always prepared to point out the measures "which Israel should adopt"; and as their advice was generally attended with happy results, "all their brethren followed the words of their lips."[3] But the calm and sober view they took of all the relations of life, engendered that easy, though not unrefined, epicureanism, which, in order to gain quiet leisure for reflection, willingly resigns every worldly ambition; and which, disdaining the prizes of the toilsome struggles for honour and distinction as worthless or trifling, does not hesitate to purchase undisturbed enjoyment even with a part of liberty. Reluctant to shield their own independence, and, after once having tasted the sweets of repose, again to exchange the sword for the ploughshare or the shepherd's staff, the people of Issachar appear to have readily, and perhaps spontaneously, placed themselves under the protection of more warlike and active tribes, as Zebulun, and especially Ephraim, and to have, in return, paid a proportionate tribute, "willingly bending their shoulders," and submitting to the uniform labours of agriculture. This is the picture which our text enables us to draw of Issachar, though the historical traditions are too scanty and fragmentary to allow a development in its individual traits.

It may be asked, whether these verses are intended as a censure? It appears that this question must, in certain respects, be answered in the affirmative. The tribe of Issachar renounced that ancestral fortitude which had steeled it for victory and conquest, and could alone guarantee its safety against the unappeased hatred of surrounding foes; and, destined to be free and independent, and to acknowledge the sovereignty of the God of Israel alone, it degraded itself by bearing a voluntary yoke, and by becoming "a tributary servant." However, this dependence cannot have been oppressive or ignominious; it was not the subjection of those who sigh under foreign dominion, or who, as captives of war, are forced to serve their masters with gratuitous labour and exhausting drudgery: for Issachar still enjoyed the happiest tranquillity and the richest blessing; possessed a most enviable territory; and grew in precious property. Hence the rebuke expressed in our passage is gentle and subdued; it is softened by the redeeming quality of *peacefulness*, averse to strife and dispute, a quality worthy of the highest recommendation in the eyes of the Hebrew, who embraced in the word "peace" nearly the whole sum of moral perfection, and of personal and political felicity; so that if the "bony ass crouching between the folds" forms a contrast to the "wild ass" attacking all and attacked by every one,[4] it is a contrast which, in one respect, at least, redounds to the praise of Issachar.

VII. Dan, vers. 16—18.

After the tribes descended from the sons of Leah, those formed by the sons of Jacob's maid-servants are introduced, arranged on the whole, according to their age; except that Naphtali, the second by birth, yields precedence to Gad and Asher,[5] a modifica-

[1] Ver. 14; Deut. xxxiii. 18.
[2] Josh. xvii. 11.
[3] 1 Chron. xii. 32.
[4] xvi. 12.
[5] Comp. xxx. 3—13; xxxv. 25, 26.

tion, no doubt, suggested by the relative importance of the tribes. But Dan maintains justly the first rank among the four: he deserves it by the political and national *interest* which, in an eminent degree, attached to the tribe which bears his name. For from it sprung the glorious hero, Samson, who, the true Hercules of his nation, soon became its lasting and cherished favourite, not more by his marvellous feats of strength and daring, than by his humorous eccentricities, peculiarly congenial to the taste of his age, and at all times certain to endear a man of distinction to the multitude, which is rejoiced to see brilliant greatness in some respects brought nearer to its own level. After he had once gained a hold upon the Hebrew mind, it was not likely that tradition should have rested or ceased to propagate his exploits; both gratitude due to his merits and the deep sympathy felt for his melancholy death, by which he once more became a benefactor of his nation, secured to his name a permanent remembrance, and to his deeds an enthusiastic acknowledgment, which, indeed, our blessing also accords to him in apt and forcible language. So entirely had the achievements of Samson eclipsed the anterior history of his tribe, that no allusion is here made to the blameable indifference with which it before, in the time of Deborah, when an extraordinary danger threatened the people, evaded its share of the common obligations, and quietly continued its lucrative pursuits.[6] Nor had it, at a still earlier period, displayed energy enough boldly to conquer an adequate territory: though not deficient in numerical strength,[7] it long carried on languid and isolated wars; for some time it suffered itself to be driven by the Amorites into the mountains, whence it was not permitted to descend into the plains;[8] several towns, which lay within the boundaries assigned to it, and which it may have temporarily possessed, fell back to the enemies, who profited by its deplorable want of organisation;[9] while others are found in the occupation of the tribe of Judah,[10] by which, not less than by Ephraim, it seems to have been assisted in times of difficulty and distress;[11] it appears, in fact, to have been among those who but very late acquired lasting abodes; and ultimately, one part of the tribe emigrated to the distant north, where, far from the rest of their kinsmen, by stratagem and violence, they killed or expelled a peaceful and harmless population, cut off from all assistance and alliance. This was the district of Laish, thenceforth called Dan, and forming the extreme northern frontier of the land of Israel.[12] But the province which the tribe was intended to occupy, lay between Ephraim in the north,[13] and Simeon in the south, while it reached in the west to the Mediterranean, and was in the east bordered by parts of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Judah.[14] This situation, not unfavourable in some respects, brought the Danites into the dangerous vicinity of the Philistines, who vexed them with perpetual attacks, and never ceased to inflict upon them loss and humiliation. Under such circumstances, they could scarcely hope ever to gain a prominent or honoured position in Israel. But they supplied, in a great measure, the deficiency of material power and of valour by craft and cunning, not always free from malice and insidiousness. It was by such means, that the division of Danites who marched to the north, had gained their triumph in Laish; that those remaining in the southern province succeeded in frustrating the invasions of the Philistines; and that even Samson achieved his most memorable deeds. How different is this conduct from the prowess of Judah, the lion, who openly and by majestic strength crushes his numerous enemies, and then quietly and in unapproachable

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[6] Judg. v. 17.

[7] The double census, recorded in the Pentateuch, states their men, above twenty years, at 62,700 and 64,400; Num. i. 39; xxvi. 43.

[8] Judg. i. 34.

[9] Josh. xix. 43; 2 Ki. i. 2; 1 Sam. v. 10; vii. 14.

[10] Josh. xv. 33; 2 Chr. xi. 10; xix. 41, 42.

[11] Judg. i. 35.

[12] Judg. xviii. 1, 7—10; 27—29; comp. Josh xix. 47.

[13] Up to Joppa; Josh. xix. 45.

[14] Comp. Josh. xix. 40—48.

security enjoys the fruits of his victories! Therefore, the tribe of Dan is, indeed, stated to have maintained its independent jurisdiction, and in spite of weakness and surrounding dangers, to have judged over all Israel during twenty years; but it is, not without a certain blame and contempt, compared with the venomous viper or cerastes, which treacherously lurking in the sand or the trace of the carriage-wheels, not easily noticed on account of its grey colour, and suddenly darting forth, attacks with mortal bite horse and rider; a reptile, held by the ancients to be so formidable that they believed, if it was killed by a man on horseback with a spear, that "the poison would run up the weapon, and kill, not only the rider, but the horse as well." A community, compelled to have recourse for its safety to such wily expedients, must, indeed, find itself in a most dangerous position, far too critical for its limited resources; hence the poet, with admirable skill and singular emphasis, identifying himself with the oppressed and embarrassed tribe, utters in its name, with mingled reliance and resignation, the fervent prayer, "In Thy help I hope, O Lord!" It appears, indeed, that the Danites, from the time of the division of the kingdom, when they joined Ephraim and were disgraced by the image of Apis, placed by Jeroboam in the northern town Dan,[1] gradually sank into such political insignificance, that they were entirely omitted in later genealogies and descriptions.

VIII. Gad, ver. 19.

The territory of Gad lay in the east of the Jordan, between the provinces of Reuben and the eastern part of Manasseh; it reached, in the north, to the south-eastern extremity of the Sea of Galilee,[2] but at some periods passed beyond it into the boundaries of Manasseh; its extent varied no less towards the east,[3] and embraced about half the districts of the Ammonites;[4] it included several cities remarkable in the history of the patriarchs and of the Judges, as Mahanaim, Ramoth, Mizpeh, Succoth, and Peniel;[5] but it was pre-eminently remarkable because it contained the grave of the great general and lawgiver, Moses; a fact which so decidedly invested the province with a character of holiness, that though situated on the east of the river, it was regarded as one of the most honoured parts of the promised land, from which the leaders of the people might legitimately arise.[6] After the Gadites had bravely assisted their brethren in the conquest of Canaan, for which services they earned praise and gratitude, they returned to their own land, and actively engaged in the breeding of cattle, to which the soil, in its principal features resembling that of Reuben, particularly invited, and which gradually resulted in a very considerable acquisition of valuable property.[7] Some circumstances conspired to preserve among them the valour and manly independence of their forefathers. The obstinate attacks to which they were exposed from the neighbouring enemies, compelled them to be always prepared for war and defence. Their principal scourge were the Ammonites, who could not forget the loss of their country, and who temporarily forced them under the yoke of servitude:[8] but the Gadites found means of regaining their liberty by more vigorous exertions, and by a closer alliance with the other Hebrew tribes on the east of the Jordan.[9] They were further constantly annoyed by the ferocious rapacity of Arabic hordes, which invaded and often devastated their territory, but on one occasion suffered well-merited retribution in a fearful and overwhelming defeat.[10] Thus the men of Gad well sustained the reputation which they enjoyed of being "men of valour, bearing shield and sword, bending the bow, and skilled in war";[11] and hence they were, in another national

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[1] 1 Ki. xi. 29, 30.
[2] Judg. xiii. 27.
[3] Comp. 1 Chron. v. 11.
[4] Josh. xiii. 25; comp. Judg. xi. 13.
[5] Comp. Josh. xiii. 24—28.
[6] Comp. Deut. xxxiii. 21.
[7] Comp. Josh. xxii. 1—8.
[8] Judg. x. 8, 17.
[9] Judg. x. 18; xi. 4—11, 32, 33.
[10] 1 Chron. v. 18—22.
[11] *Ibid.* ver. 18.

song, described with terms which, in their tenour, and almost in their form, are nearly identical with the eulogy bestowed upon Judah: "Gad dwelleth as a lion, and teareth the arm and the crown of the head."[12] The heroism of Jephthah the Gileadite may have mainly contributed to secure to the tribe much of its popularity, no doubt considerably enhanced by the peculiar and affecting domestic misfortunes which befell that conqueror. The Gadites later distinguished themselves by a friendly spirit displayed towards David, who rewarded them by numerous appointments to important public offices;[13] and they were in his time still described as "men of might, men of war fit for the battle, who could handle shield and buckler, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and who were swift as the roes upon the mountains."[14]

IX. Asher, ver. 20.

The blessing addressed to Asher, though brief, is pithy and expressive. This tribe occupied the north-western part of Palestine, bordered in the west by the Mediterranean,[15] in the north by the Lebanon and the territory of Syria, in the east by Naphtali, and in the south by Zebulun.[16] But it was not even able entirely to conquer the small district lying within these boundaries; it was compelled to leave some of the most important towns, as Acco and Zidon, in the hands of the Canaanites and Phœnicians; and it was therefore described as "dwelling among the heathen inhabitants of the land."[17] Yet the limited territorial property it owned was sufficient to impart to it a distinctive character, and to make it famous both at home and abroad. The soil yielded corn and wine and oil in such plentiful abundance, that Asher is elsewhere mentioned as "bathing his foot in oil";[18] while, as regards quality, these productions were of such rare excellence, that they found their way to royal tables. The tribe of Asher was, therefore, regarded as peculiarly blessed, and was esteemed by the fraternal tribes, because essentially contributing to the national fame and welfare. The mountain ranges of the Lebanon, which closed in the province in the north, formed an efficient protection; they were like "bars of iron and brass"; and fertility, combined with security, gave rise to a prosperous condition, which promised to be continually increasing. — Though the men of Asher took later no share in the common wars of the Hebrews,[19] they were not, like other tribes, censured for such apathy; perhaps because their dwelling in the remote north and west naturally relieved them from many federal duties, which they, however, amply compensated by a careful cultivation of their land, and by large exports to all parts of the country. But they no doubt traded with the Phœnicians also; and by their abodes on the coast they may, like the people of Zebulun, have been tempted to maritime commerce.[20]

X. Naphtali, ver. 21.

The tribe of Naphtali gained imperishable fame by one glorious event; and it is this event to which the few words introduced in our poem regarding its history manifestly refer.—The men of Naphtali, though renowned for manly vigour, were strangely deficient in self-reliance. They left several of their cities in the hands of the Canaanites, such as Beth-Shemesh and Beth-Anath.[21] They had not confidence enough to combat alone and in independent armies; they generally joined the ranks of Zebulun,[22]

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[12] Deut. xxxiii. 20.
[13] 1 Chron. xii. 8—15.
[14] 1 Chron. xii. 8.
[15] Comp. Judg. v. 17: "Asher dwells on the coast of the sea."
[16] Comp. Josh. xix. 24—30.
[17] Judg. i. 31, 32.
[18] Deut. xxxiii. 24.
[19] Judg. v. 17.
[20] Judg. *loc. cit.*
[21] Judg. i. 33; comp. Isai. viii. 23.
[22] Judg. v. 18; they appear to have been decreasing in population; comp. Num. i. 43, and xxvi. 50, where the numbers of their soldiers are respectively stated at 53,400 and 45,400.

but then fought with praiseworthy intrepidity for the liberty of the nation; they placed themselves under Gideon's banner against the allied heathens, and took their full share in the battles and the pursuit.[1] Their want of self-assurance appears still more visibly in the general Barak from Kedesh in Naphtali. Invited by Deborah, no doubt on account of his well-known prowess and that of his tribe, to take the leadership of the Hebrew army, he replied: "If thou wilt go with me, then I will go; but if thou wilt not go with me, I will not go"; to which the prophetess answered with a certain rebuke, that for such despondency he would forfeit the most enviable part of the glory, and would leave it to a feeble woman.[2] But when he had once conquered his hesitation, he and his soldiers shone by their heroic devotion and unwearied alacrity; conspicuous "on the heights of the field,"[3] they gave their countrymen a brilliant example of indomitable fortitude; so that, by a simile frequently employed in Hebrew poetry for the achievements of strength and endurance, they were compared with the "graceful hind," which light-footed and swift, easily eludes its persecutors on the mountain heights.[4] But not satisfied with having bravely fought in the war, Naphtali helped to celebrate it by the immortal song which is attributed to "Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam."[5] Even if the tribe gave no other proof of its poetical genius, of the careful culture of the mind, and of the artistic conceptions of which it was capable, it amply deserved the encomium bestowed upon it in our blessing, that it "uttered words of beauty." Thus the text is entirely intelligible by a reference to the time of Sisera and Barak.[6] But the territory of Naphtali was distinguished by a feature which, though here not alluded to, is duly dwelt upon in the benediction of Moses; namely, its exceeding fertility: "Naphtali is satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the Lord."[7] It was situated in the northern part of Palestine, bordered in the north by the Anti-Libanus, which partly reached into the district itself, so that we read of a "mountain of Naphtali";[8] in the south, by Zebulun; in the west, by Asher; and in the east, by the Jordan and the seas of Merom and Galilee, and, according to Josephus, even extending to Damascus.[9] The same historian has furnished a glowing description of the rare productiveness of this part of the country, appearing like "a happy contention of the seasons, each laying claim upon the district"; and bringing forth, during ten months of the year, both the fruits of the cold, hot, and temperate zones, as walnuts, dates, and olives; as if it had been "the ambition of nature to force plants, naturally enemies to one another, to agree together."[10]

XI. Joseph, vers. 22—26.

It may be disputed whether the blessing addressed to Judah, or that pronounced upon Joseph, is more comprehensive and more enthusiastic. Certainly the latter embraces such variety of benedictions, and so steadily progresses to the highest climax of eminence, that it undoubtedly refers to the time when the descendants of Joseph had reached their utmost power and influence. Commencing with the description of the rapid growth of their population and the enlargement of their territory,[11] to such an extent that a division into two tribes was necessary or feasible, our text proceeds to allude to the constant hostilities to which they were exposed, both from fraternal and

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[1] Judg. vi. 35; vii. 23.
[2] Judg. iv 6—9. [3] *Ibid.* v. 18.
[4] Comp. 2 Sam. i. 19, 23; ii. 18; 1 Chr. xii. 8; Prov. v. 19; vi. 5; Hab. iii. 19; Ps. xviii. 34; Isai. xxxv. 6; Cant. ii. 8, 9.
[5] Judg. v. 1.
[6] The later destinies of the tribe of Naphtali, the invasions of the Syrians into its province, the abduction of the people into the Assyrian captivity, and other reverses they experienced, have no connection with our poem; comp. 1 Ki. xv. 20; 2 Ki. xv. 29; 2 Chr. xvi. 4.
[7] Deut. xxxiii. 23.
[8] Josh. xx. 7; comp. Judg. v. 18.
[9] Antiq. V. i. 22.
[10] *Joseph.*, Bell. Jud. III. x. 8.
[11] Ver. 22; comp. Isai. i. 30; Ps. i. 3; lxxx. 10—12; cxxviii. 3.

from heathen tribes,[12] but which, ultimately resulting in complete victory, contributed still more to strengthen their power, and to bring them to a full consciousness of their resources:[13] the address, then imperceptibly restricting its scope to the more important tribe of Ephraim, next delineates the unsurpassed fertility of its districts, arising partly from the regular descent of rain and dew,[14] and partly from the abundance of springs, brooks, and rivers, so that a steady increase both of men and animals was secured; and it concludes with intimating that the love and immediate protection of God, much more effective still than even the blessings of a beneficent nature, would ultimately grant to Ephraim dominion over the kindred tribes, and adorn it with the crown of royalty.[15] These are the outlines of the picture drawn in our text; its historical truth will be sufficiently apparent from the remarks we have offered in the preceding chapter, and in the exposition of Judah's blessing;[16] and it requires no proof that we have here not simply a reference to Joseph's personal destinies, the animosity of his brothers, the persecution of Potiphar and his wife, his patience and resistance in misery and trials, and his subsequent elevation to almost royal dignity: the introductory words, "he is a fruitful bough, his branches spread over the wall," no less than the whole character of this poem which is designed to predict *future* events (ver. 1), indisputably point to the later development of the tribes of Joseph.—It may be admitted that the *kingdom* of Ephraim is not so forcibly depicted as that of Judah;[17] but the conclusion that it did not yet exist at the time to which our poem applies, would be as hazardous as the assertion that the progeny of Joseph was not yet divided into the two tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, an event here not alluded to, though universally admitted to have been accomplished long before.[18] However great the jealousy between the two rival monarchies might have been, the *fact* of their co-existence could not be denied, and the calm impartiality with which our song introduces this fact, was calculated to soften rather than to nourish the feelings of envy and anger.[19] Moreover, the kingdom of Ephraim was, immediately after its establishment, viewed with great expectations by patriots and prophets, who fostered the hope that by avoiding the errors of the past, it would surpass even the greatness and strength of the dynasty of David, which, in the successor of its great founder, had already exhibited the germs of decline and decay.

XII. Benjamin, Ver. 27.

It would appear impossible that the young and small tribe of Benjamin,[20] situated as it was between the two most influential communities of Israel, Ephraim and Judah,[21] should ever attain considerable power or authority; and it would seem sufficient if, in such dangerous vicinity, and devoid of adequate means of defence, it but succeeded in maintaining its liberty and independence. But inherent fortitude and indomitable courage raised the insignificant tribe[22] far above its material importance; and its imposing qualities are not without force and beauty celebrated in the few words of our text: "Benjamin is a wolf that teareth to pieces: in the morning he devoureth prey, and in the evening he rendeth spoil." This energy alone, perhaps not unmixed with injustice and violence,[23] can account for the boldness with which, in a bad and abject cause, the Benjamites dared to combat, single-handed, against all the other tribes; but though at first gaining several glorious victories over armies vastly superior to their own, they were indebted for their preservation from complete destruction solely to the moderation and sympathy of their brethren.[24] Their aspiring valour is further reflected in

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[12] Ver. 23.
[13] Ver. 24.
[14] Ver. 25.
[15] Ver. 26.
[16] See pp. 487—493.
[17] Ver. 10; see pp. 513, 514.
[18] Comp. Deut. xxxiii. 17.
[19] Comp. Isai. xi. 13.
[20] It counted at the first census only 35,400, and at the second 45,600 men of arms; Num. i. 37; xxvi. 41.
[21] Comp. Josh. xviii. 11—26.
[22] 1 Sam. ix. 21; comp. Judg. xxi. 3, 6.
[23] Comp. Eze. xxii. 27; Zeph. iii. 3; Jer. v. 6, etc.
[24] Judg. xix.—xxi.

the history of Ehud, the Judge, distinguished both by daring enterprise and shrewd cunning;[1] and their ambition found ample gratification in the royal dignity conferred upon Saul.[2] But the political weakness of the tribe was unable to uphold itself against the increasing strength and admirable organisation of Judah, to which it was gradually compelled to yield. And as it rapidly relapsed into its former subordinate position, the royalty which for a short time had dignified it, could properly be passed over in a poem chiefly aiming at the glorification of Judah and Joseph. Yet the men of Benjamin, though not renouncing deceit and bloodshed,[3] preserved many of their characteristic virtues; they remained famous as excellent archers, and as men expert "to sling stones at a hair breadth and not to miss";[4] and they gained considerably by the circumstance that the hills of Zion and Moriah, on which the citadel and the Temple of Jerusalem were built, partly belonged to their territory, whence Jerusalem is sometimes ascribed to Judah and sometimes to Benjamin.[5] Thus the tribe, continuing to foster its traditional heroism, inhabiting a province inferior to none in fertility, rich in springs and beautiful valleys, including the luxurious Jericho, with its palm- and balsam-trees, and boasting of hills, indeed sterile and rocky by nature, but made to yield exquisite and abundant crops by the aid of art and industry, the tribe of Benjamin could aptly be described in the blessing of Moses as "a friend of God dwelling in safety, and ever protected by His mercy."[6]

29. And he charged them, and said to them, I am to be gathered to my people: bury me with my fathers in the cave which *is* in the field of Ephron the Hittite; 30. In the cave which *is* in the field of Machpelah, which *is* before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite for a possession of a burying place 31. (There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife; and there I buried Leah) 32. *As* a purchase

29—33. Jacob had before entrusted the arrangements concerning his burial to *Joseph only*, who alone possessed the power to execute them: but he later repeated his injunctions *to all his sons*, because he then loved all with an equal share of affection, valued their devotion alike, and wished to unite them in a common deed of piety tending to restore and to cement their mutual confidence. At the corpse and the grave of their father, their hearts were once more to be joined in fraternal feeling, genuine, deep, and unreserved. This is the progress of the narrative.—It was not unusual among the ancients to convey the remains of the dead from foreign into the native countries; thus Theseus was brought from Scyros to Athens; Orestes from Tegea to Sparta; and Aristomenes from Rhodes to Messene; while the body of Alexander the Great was with splendour and pomp carried from Asia to Africa. The anxious importance which was attached to the last resting-place, accounts for the cir-

[1] Judg. iii. 15—30.
[2] Of Gibeah in Benjamin, 1 Sam. x. 26; xi. 4; ix. 1, 21.
[3] 2 Sam. iv. 2—7.
[4] Judg. xx. 16; 1 Chr. viii. 39; xii. 2; 2 Chr. xiv. 7; xvii. 17; 2 Sam. i. 19, 22, 23.
[5] Comp. Josh. xv. 8, 63; xviii. 16, 28; Judg. i. 21; Ps. lxxviii. 68.
[6] Deut. xxxiii. 12.

of the field and of the cave which *is* therein, from the children of Heth. 33. And when Jacob had finished charging his sons, he gathered his feet into the bed, and expired, and was gathered to his people.

cumstantial reiterations with regard to the cave of Machpelah; but we learn incidentally that not only Abraham and Sarah, and Isaac and Rebekah, were there interred, but Leah also, who had died more than seventeen years before, previous to Jacob's immigration into Egypt. Having concluded his charges, the patriarch, physically exhausted, but preserving unclouded serenity of mind, and no longer disturbed by regret, remorse, or apprehension, paid the debt of nature.

CHAPTER L.

1. And Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him. 2. And Joseph commanded his servants, the physicians, to embalm his father: and the physicians embalmed Israel. 3. And forty days were

1—14. As Jacob was to be entombed in Canaan, and as, besides, the Egyptians intended to manifest their sympathy by mourning during seventy days previous to interment, as was their ordinary custom, it seemed advisable to preserve the body by the process of embalming for so long a journey and so protracted a period. Joseph is, therefore, stated to have given orders to "his servants, the physicians." It cannot surprise us, that Joseph was surrounded by *many* medical advisers, since we know that each Egyptian physician applied himself exclusively to the one disease or part of the body treated by his father and his ancestors. Hence, in spite of the vast number of doctors, the organism of the frame was but little understood; and the religious aversion against the anatomical dissection of human bodies, the severe penalties attending the least deviation from traditional remedies, the payment of the physicians from the public treasury, and the stagnation generally arising from the system of castes, were not favourable to the advancement of medical science, which, moreover, as the physicians belonged to the lower class of priests, was long retarded by the fetters of superstition. Yet the Egyptian doctors naturally acquired considerable empirical skill in the one particular branch to which they devoted their whole attention: and so great was the reputation they enjoyed in the ancient world, that foreign kings eagerly sought their services, and foreign scholars anxiously courted their advice and instruction: even in later times, it was, in Rome, the greatest recommendation for a physician if he was known to have studied at Alexandria.

The order of the ceremonies alluded to in our text, and on the whole agreeing with classical and monumental records, was as follows: 1. When the extinction of the vital breath could no longer be doubted, the relatives began a *preliminary mourning*, perhaps observed during the day of death only (ver. 1), and consisting in public lamentations, in covering the head and the face with mud (or dust), girding up the garments, and beating the breasts. 2. Then the body was delivered up to the embalmers, who, in the case of Jacob, completed their work in forty days (ver. 3), though it more frequently required seventy. 3. Simultaneously with the operations of embalming, commenced the *chief* or *real mourning*, which, lasting

completed for him; for so many days are completed in embalming: and the Egyptians mourned for him seventy days. 4. And when the days of his mourning were passed, Joseph spoke to the house of Pharaoh, saying, If, I pray you, I have found grace in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh, saying, 5. My father made

about seventy days (ver. 3), usually ended together with the process of mummification, but which, in the instance of the patriarch, exceeded it by thirty days. 4. The body, after having been enclosed in a case of wood or stone (ver. 26), was then either deposited in the family vaults (ver. 13), or placed in a sepulchral chamber of the house of the nearest relative (ver. 26).

If we now turn to the account of Herodotus on the operations of embalming (ii. 86—88), and endeavour to combine with it some observations of Diodorus Siculus (i. 91), we may thus briefly delineate the three different methods of mummification described by both authors.

I. If the most expensive mode, estimated at one talent of silver, or about £250, was employed, the brain was first taken out through the nostrils, partly with an iron (or bronze) hook, and partly by the infusion of drugs; then an appointed dissector made, with a sharp Ethiopian stone, a deep incision (generally about five inches long) in the left side, at a part before marked out by a scribe: but having scarcely performed this operation, he hastily fled, persecuted by those present with stones and imprecations, as one who was guilty of the heinous crime of violently mutilating the body of a fellow-man. Then one of the embalmers, holy men, who lived in the society of the priests, and enjoyed unreserved access to the temples, extracted through the incision all intestines, except the kidneys and the heart; every part of the viscera was spiced, rinsed with palm-wine, and sprinkled with pounded perfumes. The body was next filled with pure myrrh, cassia, and other aromatics, with the exception of frankincense; sewed up; and steeped in natrum during seventy days, after the expiration of which period it was washed, and wrapped in bandages of linen cloth covered with gum. By this procedure, all the parts of the body, even the hair of the eye-brows and eye-lids, were admirably preserved; and the very features of the countenance remained unaltered.

II. The cost of the second mode of embalming amounted to twenty minæ, or about £81. No incision was made, nor were the bowels taken out; but the body was, by means of syringes, filled with oil of cedar at the abdomen, and steeped in natrum for seventy days. When the oil was let out, the intestines and vitals came out in a state of dissolution, while the natrum consumed the flesh; so that nothing of the body remained except the skin and the bones: and this skeleton was returned to the relatives of the deceased.—The possibility of an injection, as here described, without the aid of incisions, has been doubted; and, in some cases, incisions have indeed been observed near the rectum.

III. A third and very cheap method, employed for the poorer classes, consisted merely in thoroughly rinsing the abdomen with syrmæa, a purgative liquor (perhaps composed of an infusion of senna and cassia), and then steeping the body in natrum for the usual seventy days.

According to Herodotus, then, the mummification lasted, in every case, *seventy* days; and the same fact may be derived from the text of Diodorus. And yet our text remarks clearly, "and *forty* days were completed for him; *for so many days are completed in embalming*" (ver. 3). Are we, under these circumstances, compelled here to suppose an inaccurate or arbitrary statement? We believe that the study of Egyptian mummies

me swear, saying, Behold, I die: in my grave which I have digged for me in the land of Canaan, there shalt thou bury me. Now, therefore, let me go up, I pray thee, and bury my father, and I will return. 6. And Pharaoh said, Go up, and bury thy father, as he made thee swear. 7. And Joseph went up to bury his father:

does not sanction such conclusion. It is certain, that the modes of embalming varied very considerably in different periods and in the several districts of Egypt. The accounts of Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus are so obviously divergent in essential points, that they must be held to describe perfectly distinct ways of mummification. While, according to the former, the sprinkling of the body and the filling of the interior seem to be the work of one day, *after which* the corpse having been sewed up was laid in natrum for seventy days, that "the flesh might be dissolved"; the latter historian states that during the whole period ointments and perfumes were applied, while he does not at all mention the steeping in natrum, by no means an unimportant and accessory part of the operations.—But not less striking are the contrasts between the descriptions of both historians and the ocular evidence derived from the numerous mummies discovered and examined. Herodotus observes, that the body was sewed up where the incision had been made; but existing mummies show that the cut surfaces were brought together by simple apposition. According to Herodotus, *all* the bowels were taken out; according to Diodorus, the kidneys and the heart were left; while many discovered specimens teach us that the entrails, after having been washed with palm-wine and sprinkled with aromatics, were replaced into the cavity of the body, either entire, or rolled up in three or four distinct portions, and enclosed in bandages. According to Diodorus, the corpse was, by the embalmers, first laid on the ground; but on the mummy cases and on numerous papyri, we find it invariably on a table, furnished with a lion's head. According to the historian of Halicarnassus, the mummies were placed erect against the wall; but in the mummy-pits visited by modern travellers, they are generally seen lying in regular horizontal rows, or sunk into a cement. It appears from Herodotus, that the ventral incision was applied in the most expensive process only; while it is found in mummies not enclosed in sarcophagi, and is, on the other hand, wanting in many prepared in the most costly style. In some specimens, the cavity of the body is filled up with asphaltum; in others, with the ashes of sandal-, cedar-, and other wood, with resinous matters, salt, myrrh, or argillaceous earth, and in others not at all. The cuticle is, in many mummies, carefully removed, in which operation great precaution was taken not to disturb any of the nails; and yet neither Herodotus nor Diodorus allude to this curious usage. The poor were not embalmed in any of the methods described by the historians, but were simply laid upon beds of charcoal, wrapped round with clothes, and covered with a mat, upon which sand, seven or eight feet high, was heaped. If we consider these differences, and the many others which will be apparent from later remarks, we cannot hesitate to accede to the result obtained by modern researches, that "in no case the observations of Herodotus are strictly true, though nothing has been described by him, that has not in some instance or other been detected." A classification of the mummies is indeed impossible. The only division of practical value which they admit is into mummies *with* and *without* the ventral incision: *the former*, if preserved by balsamic matter, have the features, teeth, and hair com-

and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt. 8. And all the house of Joseph, and his brothers, and his father's house: only their little ones, and their flocks, and their herds, they left in the land of Goshen. 9. And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen: and

pletely uninjured, are dry, light, and easily broken, emit a strong aromatic smell when thrown upon hot coals; or if prepared by natrum, have the skin hard and elastic, resembling parchment, the countenance a little altered, and the hair considerably impaired: *the latter*, if salted and covered with pissasphaltum (and this is the class of mummies most frequently found), are not recognisable, black, dry, heavy, and of disagreeable odour; or if simply salted and dried, have the features destroyed, the hair wholly wanting, the bones white like those of a skeleton, and are, in fact, the worst as regards preservation. Hence it is as superfluous, as it is impossible, to try a conciliation between the *forty* days of Genesis and the *seventy* of Herodotus; certainly the attempts hitherto made to effect that accordance, have been signally unsuccessful: though the author may possibly have considered a more simple and less extended mode of embalming sufficient in the case of Jacob, whose mummification was not grounded on the superstition that the existence of the soul depends on the preservation of the body; while he naturally did not wish to curtail the usual seventy days of mourning in honour of the revered patriarch.

We conclude with a few additional remarks in connection with the art of embalming. The possibility, long questioned, of drawing out the brains through the nostrils, has now been fully demonstrated. In some cases, the nose remained entirely unhurt, though in some it was broken or destroyed. The brain was sometimes replaced with bituminous and resinous matter, or with spices in a state of coarse powder; and sometimes the apertures of the nostrils and part of the cavity of the skull were filled with cloth or linen, in one instance, nine yards long, but of very fine texture.—Various kinds of insects and pupae have been found in the skull, otherwise totally empty.—Yet in some cases, though the body was very carefully mummified, the brain was not removed.—Beneath the embalming table were placed four vases, the covers of which were respectively provided with the head of a man, a jackal, a hawk, and a cynocephalus, representing the four genii of the lower world.—The Ethiopian stone with which the incision was made, is the Ethiopian basalt, extremely hard and capable of a very keen edge.—Over the incision, the eye of Osiris was represented, since it was believed that the soul of the dead, if found virtuous, became again a part of the great god from whom it had emanated. —The bowels were, according to Porphyry enclosed in a chest (or in vases of baked clay or alabaster), and sunk into the Nile, with prayers to the Sun, who was entreated to receive the soul of the deceased into the regions of the gods, and to impute all his transgressions not to the wickedness of his heart, but to the contents of the chest: but this custom has not unreasonably been questioned as implying a pollution of the holy river, and an insult to the dead.—The mummies, even those which have not the ventral incision, were frequently gilded on the nails of the fingers and toes, and sometimes on the eye-lids, the lips, and the face, the hands and the feet. Leaves of gold have been found on the forehead, the eyes, the tongue, and the nose, and in some instances, on the whole body; while in others, the head is adorned with an artificial crown of olive in copper gilt.

the procession was very great. 10. And they came to the threshing-floor of Atad, which *is* beyond the Jordan, and there they lamented with a great and very vehement lamentation: and he made a mourning for his father seven days. 11. And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning in the floor of Atad,

Not a few of these mummies may be those of Greeks who died in Egypt in the time of the Pharaohs or the Ptolemies; since some bear Greek inscriptions, and the custom of wreathing the illustrious dead prevailed among the Hellenes. Nor was the usage of wrapping the body in sheets of gold unknown to them; the corpse of Alexander the Great was thus brought from Asia in a kind of chase-work so closely applied to the skin that even the expression of the countenance was preserved; and it was further protected by another veil of the same precious metal. Gold sheets of considerable weight and value have also been discovered in the graves of northern tribes, on the banks of the Volga, the Irtish, and the Ob. One of the Ptolemies substituted a covering of glass for that of gold, by a contrivance of most surprising skill.—Sometimes the nails of the fingers and toes, the palms and soles, seem to have been stained scarlet with a substance like *henna*, consisting of the leaves of the shrub Tamarhenna, or of Lawsonia, dried, powdered, and formed into a paste.—The body was always extended, and the head erect; but the arms are found in some cases lying closely along the sides of the body, in others crossed over the breast; while in others, one arm is placed in the former, and the other in the latter position. — There is no reason to doubt the correctness of the order of the operations as stated by Herodotus, and to suppose that the steeping in natrum preceded the application of the aromatics. The description of the Greek historian does not less satisfactorily than the alleged agency of a great degree of heat, mentioned by no ancient author, account for the fact that "the resinous and aromatic substances penetrated even into the innermost structure of the bones."—Hence mummy was much used as a drug in the sixteenth and part of the seventeenth centuries, in cases of bruises and wounds, and the Arabs still apply mummy powder, mixed with butter, as a favourite remedy for contusions. — The bandages were never of woollen stuffs, because they are apt to harbour vermin; they were, even in the mummies of the poorest individual, like the robes of the priests, usually of linen, and seldom of cotton, a fact which has been ascertained by exact microscopic examination; those nearest to the body were of the coarsest kind; they were generally dipped in an antiseptic fluid, either cedria or some other vegetable preparation; many are furnished with hieroglyphics, expressing the name and profession of the deceased, or containing his praise in verses; some bear enchorial characters with representations of the lower world; and some have names in Greek letters. They were variously tinged; sometimes they had a blue border, or a fringe terminating in knots; some contained napkins so perfectly preserved as to be still fit for use; others included garments which had been worn and mended, with embroidered initials; or artificial and most intricate wreaths, consisting of two garlands with red berries and the petals of the lotus; or curious leathern fingers, perhaps intended as amulets. After the first or outer layer of the bandages were found idols in agate, jasper, and other stones, representing Isis, Apis, Horus, or frogs, and arranged as collars; or necklaces of gold, coral, lapis lazuli, or of pearls in enamelled glass; further, the four genii of the Amenti and other amulets in wax gilt; rings and ear-rings,

they said, This *is* a vehement mourning to the Egyptians: therefore was its name called Abel-mizraim, which *is* beyond the Jordan. 12. And his sons did to him as he had commanded them: 13. For his sons carried him into the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the

spangles in the plaited hair, girdles in gold, bracelets in fine pearls and precious stones, metallic mirrors under the head, and especially scarabæi of very various stones, on tablets in the form of an Egyptian temple, provided with the figures of Isis and Nephytis, and covered with hieroglyphics, in which case they were placed on the chest or beneath the eyes of the mummies, to indicate the protecting influence of the deity. Though some mummies were not bandaged at all, but only covered with a mat, the quantity of bandages employed in others is extraordinary; they are often folded twenty to thirty times round the body, in some cases they consist of not less than a thousand ells, up to a yard in breadth, and weigh thirty pounds and upwards. But the texture is occasionally as fine as muslin, the "woven air," the admiration of the ancient world—The bandages were most neatly and closely applied by means of compresses and rollers in every possible shape and position, chiefly with the view of effectually excluding the air.—In mummies of distinguished personages, the arms and legs were bandaged separately; strips of red and white linen were intermixed; the feet provided with sandals of painted leather, the arms and wrists with bracelets, and sometimes the face, the hands, and feet, with masks. The eyes and eyebrows are found of enamel. Some mummies are varnished over with a dark leather colour, appearing like a "uniform coat of mail"; some bear portraits of the deceased, not unskilfully executed, upon a thin plate of cedar wood.—Then the corpse was, in many, but by no means in all, instances, placed into a *mummy-case*. First, a *cartonage*, consisting of many layers of linen cemented together, plastered with lime on the inside, and hence resembling pasteboard, but of astonishing durability, was made to fit exactly the shape of the body; it was sewed up at the back, and beautifully painted and ornamented with numerous subjects, as the principal gods, especially of the lower world, holding judgment over the dead, sacred arks, and boats; the face, often covered with thin gold-leaf, was perhaps intended to resemble that of the deceased; the eyes were enamelled; the hair carefully imitated was decked with gold or other ornaments; and a net-work of coloured beads spread over the breast or the whole body.—The *outer case*, though sometimes employed without the *cartonage*, was either of wood, generally of the sycamore, deal, or cedar (symbolical of eternity), richly painted, or, less frequently, of basalt, granite, slate, limestone, or red earthenware, while the alleged sarcophagus of Alexander the Great and the so-called "Lover's Fountain," both preserved in the British Museum, are of *breccia*. When of wood, the case was either of oblong shape, with curved or pointed lid, on which sometimes the figure of the deceased was represented in relief; or it had the form of the mummied body, with a winged scarabæus or globe, a hawk or a ram-headed vulture.—The small number of mummies of children hitherto found has justly caused surprise, and can only be accounted for by the supposition that the bodies of infants were deposited in separate pits, none of which have as yet been discovered.—Mummification was customary till the fifth century of the Christian era; but from that time it fell gradually into disuse.—The modern Egyptians wash their dead thoroughly in water in which leaves of the lote-tree have been boiled, and use in that operation the fibres of the palm-tree; stop up with cotton every aperture, as the nostrils and ears; shave the body and remove all hair; sprinkle the corpse with a mixture of water, pounded camphor, dried

field of Machpelah, which Abraham had bought with the field for a possession of a burying-place of Ephron the Hittite, before Mamre. 14. And Joseph returned to Egypt, he, and his brothers, and all who went up with him to bury his father, after he had buried his father.—

and pounded leaves of the lote or other trees, with rose-water, aloë, and similar perfumes; and they then bind together the ankles, and place the hands upon the breast. If the deceased was a man of property, the body is afterwards successively wrapped in muslin, in cotton cloth of thicker texture, striped stuff of silk and cotton intermixed, and a kashmere shawl; white and green are the usual colours; blue, or what approaches it, is generally avoided. The body of a poor man is simply surrounded with a few pieces of cotton or put into a kind of bag.—The Egyptian art of embalming was known and practised by the Palmyreans also. But the Babylonians, and, in some instances, the later Jews embalmed the body in honey, after having covered it with wax; the Persians enveloped it with the latter substance only; the Greeks and Romans sometimes with honey alone; the Ethiopians plastered the body with gypsum, painted it to make it resemble the living person, and then surrounded it with a column of glass or crystal (perhaps fossil salt or a diaphanous resin), through which it was from all parts visible; and others employed simply perfumes, spices, and unctions.

Between the completion of embalming and the burial, funeral services were solemnised; the mummy was placed before an altar and anointed; and the rites consisted in prayers, libations, offerings of incense, cakes, flowers, and fruits, and in repeated feasts, to which the relations and friends of the departed were invited.—The funeral processions were both solemn and magnificent, but naturally varied according to the social position of the deceased. —In the vaults were not only placed the mummies, but, on small tables, offerings of cakes, fowl, and other objects; implements to indicate the profession or occupation of the dead, such as a censer, an inkstand, or a boat, if he had been a priest, a scribe, or a mariner; images of the entombed, and tablets of stone or wood, in the form of an Egyptian shield, with inscriptions regarding his character and career; papyri and jewels; even the sawdust of the floor where the body had been cleansed, was tied in small linen bags, often to the number of twenty or thirty, and deposited in vases.

It would be superfluous to describe the violent forms of mourning customary in the East. Among the ancient Egyptians, it consisted in abstaining from baths, wine, and ointment; in avoiding all luxury in eating, all comfort and elegance in garments; in covering the head with ashes; allowing the hair of the head and the beard to grow; and in vociferous lamentations, repeated twice daily, and usually swelled by the clamours of hired mourners.

It is, indeed, surprising that Joseph, the viceroy, should have required the intervention of subordinate courtiers to obtain permission for Jacob's interment in Canaan (vers. 4, 5). The author may have considered Joseph's power as less extensive after the expiration of the season of famine, with which his immediate charge ended; or he may have supposed the accession of a new Pharaoh, as twenty-eight years had elapsed since Joseph was summoned to the royal palace. Others believe that the mourning, during which the Egyptians in many respects neglected their usual attention to their external appearance, precluded Joseph from coming into the royal presence; for though "the days of weeping" had passed (ver. 4), the rites of mourning ceased only on the day of burial (comp. ver. 10).

The funeral procession seems to have taken its way from the province of Go-

15. And when Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, Joseph will perhaps hate us, and will fully requite us all the evil which we did to him. 16. And they sent messengers to Joseph, saying, Thy father commanded before he died, saying, 17. So shall you say to Joseph, Oh forgive, I pray thee, the trespass of thy brothers, and their sin; for they did to thee evil: and now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father. And Joseph wept when they spoke to him. 18. And his brothers also went and fell down before him; and they said, Behold, we *are* thy servants. 19. And Joseph said to them, Fear not; for *am* I in God's stead? 20. But as for you, you meant evil against me; *but* God meant it for good, to bring to pass, as *it is* this day, to preserve much people. 21. Now,

shen in north-easterly direction towards Gaza, a journey of eight to ten days; within the boundaries of the land of Canaan, and, probably, not much to the south of Hebron, it stopped at the "threshing-floor of Atad," where both the sons of Jacob and the Egyptians who accompanied them, renewed their mourning during seven days. The former next proceeded alone to the cave of Machpelah to discharge their melancholy duty, while the latter remained at Atad awaiting the return of the Hebrews, together with whom they then journeyed back to Egypt. This is the clear and simple tenour of the narrative.

15—26. The Hebrew historian is so deeply impressed with the great and momentous principle embodied in the life of Joseph, that in spite of manifold interruptions and episodes, as the settlement of the Hebrews in Goshen, a new organisation of the Egyptian empire, the adoption of Ephraim and Manasseh, and the prophetic address, death, and burial of Jacob he once more strongly enforces *the doctrine of a special Providence* (see p. 409), and skilfully completes the varied incidents of a long narrative. Although it might appear that, after the lapse of so many years, suspicion and animosity had entirely vanished from the hearts of the brothers; he places the reader again in the midst of the moral complications which had caused the greatness of Joseph through the guilt and shame of the rest. Hence he not only repeats the compunctions, the confession, and the fear of the offenders; but also the unreserved pardon and cheering consolations of the sufferer Joseph, who, convinced that the will of God had designed the wondrous events, and that the brothers had before been sufficiently punished for their attempted crime, abhorred the idea of revenge, and humbly exclaimed, "Am I in God's stead"? And he finally draws the conclusion in a train of thought happily expressed by a modern poet:

"All nature is but art unknown to thee,
All chance, direction which thou canst not see,
All discord, harmony not understood,
All partial evil, universal good:
And spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
One truth is clear: whatever is, is right."
Pope, Essay on Man, I. x.

Joseph, so exalted in his views, and so unwavering in his rectitude, naturally deserved every temporal blessing: he lived to see descendants to the third and fourth generation, and he died, fifty-four years

therefore, fear not: I will nourish you and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spoke kindly to them. 22. And Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he and his father's house: and Joseph lived a hundred and ten years. 23. And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third *generation:* the children also of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were born upon Joseph's knees. 24. And Joseph said to his brothers, I die: and God will surely remember you, and bring you out of this land to the land which He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. 25. And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely remember you, and you shall carry up my bones from hence. 26. So Joseph died a hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

after Jacob, with the comforting certainty that his body, carefully embalmed and enshrined in a sarcophagus, would in due time be interred in the land of promise. These traits were indispensably demanded by the organism and tendency of the tale. But why did not Joseph, like Jacob, order his remains to be forthwith conveyed to Canaan? Was he less scrupulous, or did he feel less deeply for the future of the Hebrew race than his father? The only satisfactory reply is, that tradition had not handed down the record of any funeral procession immediately after Joseph's death, while it preserved the memory of his burial at a much later period, in the piece of ground near Shechem bought by Jacob (comp. Exod. xiii. 19; Josh. xxiv. 32).

As Machir was the firstborn son of Manasseh, he sometimes represents the whole tribe to which he belonged. The sons of Machir, among whom Gilead distinguished himself by valour, conquered large districts in the east of the Jordan, especially Gilead and Bashan, from whence they expelled the Amorites; but some branches of Machir's family obtained inheritance on the west of the river, among that part of Manasseh which there finally settled. The name of Machir was long preserved in the same tribe.

Joseph is but rarely mentioned by profane writers; and the few notices which occur are little in harmony with the statements of Genesis. Artapanus remarks, that Joseph, persecuted by his brothers, had himself entreated Arabian neighbours to bring him to Egypt, where he introduced a system of measures and weights; Justinus represents him as the father of Moses; and the Koran, following Talmudical and other traditionary sources, has worked out his life with profuse and romantic embellishments.

The last words of Joseph appear like a transition to the period of servitude and wretchedness which awaited the Hebrews in Egypt; "God will surely remember you," said he, "and bring you out of this land": scarcely has the discord within Jacob's family been fully resolved into harmony, when a new and intricate problem is hinted at—lest the interest abate, and the unity of the work be mistaken.

FINIS.

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